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A POPULAR ILLUSTRATED REPORT
OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN
BIBLE SOCIETY 1912-1913



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WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
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Photo by

A. Bougault.

MOORISH MOTHERS.

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THE BIBLE HOUSE, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON

1913

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Except where otherwise stated, the incidents and statistics in this Popular Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society belong to last year's record. Here it is only possible to offer a bird's-eye view of the main aspects of the Society's operations. For a more detailed account the reader is referred to the Hundred and Ninth Annual Report, price 1s.

T. H. DARLOW,

Literary Superintendent.

THE BIBLE HOUSE,
August, 1913.

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HAVE YE NEVER READ?

CONCERNING A B C

AMONG human inventions the most astonishing of all is the alphabet. Nothing else which has been framed by art or man's device appears so wonderful as this. To choose scratches of certain shapes and to arrange them so that they convey ideas from one mind to another—this was an achievement which makes other discoveries seem trivial in comparison. And it was accomplished by long-forgotten folk in the dim dawn of history. To-day we take the alphabet for granted as though it were part of the universal order, like the stars or the sea. We assume, with Dogberry, that "to read and to write comes by nature." Yet there was a time, as Mr. Kipling reminds us in his "Just So Stories," when all men on earth were unlettered. "As easy as a b c" has passed into proverbial speech; but how our own a b c originated remains a dark and thorny question. Professor Flinders Petrie confesses that "no one would choose the present time to make a pronouncement on so confused a subject."

HAVE YE NEVER READ?

We know, at any rate, that writing and reading are of enormous antiquity. In the valley of the Nile inscriptions have been found which go back between three and four thousand years before Christ. Inscribed tablets of clay prove that writing was freely used in the valley of the Euphrates at an even earlier date. In various regions primitive people discovered how to convey information by means of a series of rude pictures, after the fashion of the Red Indians. The first Egyptian hieroglyphics were obviously pictographs of natural objects—a bird, or a snake, or a man's hand.

Now it has been generally believed that these became the ancestors of the modern alphabet. The discovery was due to an eminent French scholar, the late Vicomte de Rougé, who traced several stages in the strange descent. First came the Egyptian picture-hieroglyphs, incised on stone. Then these pictures were debased and conventionalized into the thick, leech-like character of the "hieratic" script used by Egyptian priests, such as we find painted in black, treacly ink on papyrus. Then these hieratic characters became modified, mainly by Semitic influence, into the oldest Phœnician letters, from which have been derived probably all the great alphabets of the world. Slightly modified from the Phœnician arose the archaic Greek alphabets, out of which finally grew the Roman a b c—which we learned in our nurseries. A few English letters still bear traces of the picture-signs in which they originated. Our letter M for example, began as the outline of an owl; but in course of time the bird's tail and feet and body dwindled away and disappeared, until only its head was left. Still, however, if we draw

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a capital M, the two points stick up like an owl's pointed ears, while the strokes between represent the beak.

In the slow, painful development which we have briefly summarized the really obscure step is the change—it was an immense and astounding advance—from the hieratic characters of Egypt to the alphabetical letters which the Phœnicians adopted and popularized. We can understand how a picture-sign is made to represent a word. That has been the immemorial usage, for instance, in China. Hence has resulted the terrible Chinese script, according to which each word must have its separate and distinct sign or “ideogram,” so that several thousands of different signs are required to print the Chinese New Testament. But who can properly explain how the primitive “ideogram,” which stood for an object, was transmuted into the “phonogram,” which stood for a syllable, and then into the letter which stood for a single sound? Picture-writing had been known and practised for long centuries. Many primeval peoples seem also to have used a common body of signs—like the mason's marks on ancient buildings or like the numerals in arithmetic—which became more or less current along the Mediterranean shores. But what primitive genius first selected certain signs and characters, and then gave them phonetic values? His was the supreme discovery of the human race. The alphabet went forth conquering and to conquer the world. By the magic of a b c, stone and parchment and paper have been made to speak as with living voices, so that great minds can transmit their thoughts and bequeath their knowledge to their fellow-men.

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To-day we find many kinds of alphabets used by various races. In English there are twenty-six letters; in Russian there are thirty-six; in Bohemian there are forty; in New Zealand the Maori language is written with only fourteen; in India the Marathi alphabet contains over three hundred letters, or combinations of letters. The Bible Society has already employed sixty different alphabets or sets of characters in fulfilling its mission to print the Gospel for all nations.

Some of these versions are read, as English is read, from left to right; others, like Hebrew, are read from right to left; others, again, like Chinese and Japanese and Korean, begin at the right-hand top corner of the page and are read downwards in columns; others, yet again, like Manchu and Mongolian, begin at the left-hand top corner of the page and are read downwards in columns. Hundreds of languages spoken by savage tribes have been reduced to written form for the first time and provided with an alphabet, in order that they may express the Gospel of Everlasting Love.

The problem of reducing spoken language to written form has still to be faced, when Christian missionaries evangelize a barbarous race which possesses no literature of its own. To solve this problem is always a difficult task. Where native characters do not exist, the roman alphabet is commonly adopted, perhaps with additional signs and accents. But the connexion between sound and sense often proves extraordinarily complex. Even in English a single syllable, such as "box," can have several meanings: box may mean a trunk, or a blow, or an evergreen shrub, or part of a

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theatre, or the driver's seat on a carriage. But in Japanese the single sound *ki* has at least seventy-two possible meanings, each of which is expressed in writing by a different Japanese character. On the other hand, among the Shans in Burma the same written word may be intoned or pronounced in a dozen different ways, each conveying a distinct sense. Thus, for example, *ma ma ma ma ma* (if properly intoned) can mean "help the horse! a mad dog is coming." Similarly *pa pa pa pa pa* can mean "my aunt went towards the jungle, with fish slung on her shoulder"; and *kai kai kai kai kai* can mean "a fowl has just gone by, busily scratching mud."

Such illustrations have a serious interest. For this system of "tones" is by no means confined to the Shan language. Elsewhere in Burma, and in Tibet, it prevails to a certain extent; and it is in full force over Siam and Cochin-China, and throughout all the eighteen provinces of China. The instances quoted indicate the difficulties which missionaries encounter in speaking and writing these strange tongues, and in translating into them the Scriptures. For the slightest inaccuracy in the intonation of a word—pronouncing it a little too high or a little too low, too long or too short—will altogether change the meaning of a sentence. In Chinese as spoken at Peking, there are only 420 possible syllables; yet these are made available for enunciating every thought which the mind of man can conceive, mainly by means of this wonderful system of tones. But the tones must be uttered correctly, or else the speaker will only enunciate nonsense. And not only must he speak correctly, he must hear correctly. Unless his ear is trained and tuned to catch the

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niceties of intonation, he will be able to understand but little of what is said to him. No wonder that one of the early missionaries wrote: "When I arrived in Cochinchina, and heard the natives speak, particularly the women, I thought I heard the twittering of birds, and I gave up all hope of ever learning it." To-day the Bible Society has on its list three Gospels and the Acts translated and printed in that very language.

We are reminded of John Eliot, one of the Pilgrim Fathers, who became the first English missionary to the heathen since the Reformation. He spent sixty years in Massachusetts, where the forests and plains were at that time peopled by redskins. Among those tribes he laboured with a devotion and success which earned for him the title of the apostle of the Indians. He mastered their speech and reduced it to writing, and then translated into it the Scriptures. We may form some idea of what the task involved, from a specimen word of this Indian language, a word simply meaning "catechism":—

kummogokdonattoottammooctiteaongannunnonash.

Yet John Eliot completed his version of the Bible, by living out his own maxim: "Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do anything."

PARCHMENT, PAPER, AND PRINT

THE oldest forms of writing which we possess have come down to us inscribed upon stone—as in the venerable monuments of Egypt and Assyria and the Moabite Stone in Palestine. At Sinai, Israel received the Decalogue written on stone tables; and the patriarch Job desired that his words might be graven with an iron pen in the rock for ever. The records of primitive Babylonia are preserved on tablets of clay, covered with cuneiform characters. Wood was similarly employed, as the Iliad bears witness: wooden tablets, coated with whitewash or with wax, were commonly used to write upon by the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is curious to find Sir H. M. Stanley describing* how on his first visit to Uganda, in 1875, portions of the New Testament were translated or paraphrased by him and his companions for King Mtesa, and written on thin polished boards of white wood. “During the three months I remained with Mtesa, the translations which we made were very copious, and the principal events from the Creation to the Crucifixion were also fairly written out, forming quite a bulky library of boards.”

Leather has also played an important part in the early history of writing, especially of the Bible. In Egypt leather rolls survive dating from about

* *Cornhill Magazine*, January, 1901, pp. 60, 61.

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2000 B.C. The mention of the "scribe's knife" in Jeremiah xxxvi. 23 suggests that the roll which King Jehoiakim destroyed was of leather. And the rule of the Talmud which requires that copies of the Law of Moses shall be written only on skins—a rule still observed in the case of the Hebrew volumes intended for reading in the synagogue—points back to the archaic usage among the Jews.

Papyrus.

The tall papyrus plant—the "bulrushes" which sheltered Moses in his infancy—once grew profusely in the swamps and shallows of the river Nile. Thin strips of the pith of its stem were pressed together into sheets, which supplied in classical times the commonest material for writing. Indeed, our word "paper" is derived from the name "papyrus." The Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament, made under the Ptolemies at Alexandria, would probably be written on papyrus rolls; so doubtless were the originals and the earliest copies of the books of the New Testament.

Parchment.

In the third century after Christ, papyrus began to be superseded by parchment or vellum. Both those names are applied to skins of animals, untanned but specially smoothed and prepared to receive writing. About the time when Constantine adopted Christianity as the state religion of the Empire, the papyrus roll gave place to the vellum codex, or manuscript in book form. The contents of the codex were often written on its pages in narrow columns, transmitted from the narrow columns found in



A BARGE ON THE NILE LADEN WITH STRAW.

PARCHMENT, PAPER, AND PRINT

papyri. All our early Greek manuscripts of the New Testament are on vellum. It was not until a thousand years later that paper came into use for books; but after the invention of printing it superseded vellum, just as vellum had displaced papyrus.

The Errors of Scribes.

Before the printing press was set up in Europe, a book could be multiplied and handed down only by means of copies made by scribes. Now the human hand and eye are so liable to err that no copy, except of brief passages, can be relied upon as entirely accurate. Moreover, different scribes will make different mistakes; and hence it comes to pass, as Sir F. G. Kenyon * has pointed out, that no two copies of an ancient book are exactly the same. To ascertain the actual words of a book, as they were originally composed and written down by the author, is the business of textual criticism.

Now the New Testament stands apart from all other ancient works: first, because it has exerted a quite incommensurable influence on the history of the world; secondly, because the manuscript copies of it which we possess are incomparably more plentiful in number and more varied in kind.

Our most ancient copies of the New Testament were transcribed from 250 to 300 years after the books were originally written. That may seem a considerable interval; but it is as nothing to the interval which parts most of the great classical authors from their earliest extant manuscripts.

* *In his admirable "Textual Criticism of the New Testament," to which the present writer is greatly indebted.*

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"We believe that we have in all essentials an accurate text of the seven extant plays of Sophocles; yet the earliest substantial manuscript upon which it is based was written more than 1,400 years after the poet's death. Æschylus, Aristophanes, and Thucydides are in the same state; while with Euripides the interval is increased to 1,600 years. For Plato it may be put at 1,300 years; for Demosthenes as low as 1,200. The great Latin authors are somewhat better off. Horace is represented by several manuscripts written within 900 years of his death. There is an excellent copy of Terence after an interval of about 700 years, and portions of Livy only about 500 years after his death. For Lucretius, however, we have an interval of nearly 1,000 years; for Catullus about 1,600. Only Virgil approaches the New Testament in earliness of attestation. He died eight years before the Christian era; and there is at least one nearly complete manuscript which is attributed to the fourth century, besides several small fragments, and two more of the fifth century. Yet even so his text is not in so favourable a position as that of the New Testament by nearly 100 years."*

Again, the texts of the classical authors have been preserved in manuscripts which may be counted by tens or at most by hundreds. But the number of New Testament manuscripts, more or less complete, which have come down to us in the original Greek is over four thousand. To these must be added the witness of many early and important translations. Of the Latin Vulgate version there are at least eight thousand copies extant, and "a thousand would be moderate for the existing manuscripts of other early versions, in Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Gothic, and the rest. It is therefore probably within the mark to say that there are in existence twelve thousand manuscript copies of the New Testament, of which no two are precisely alike."

* *Kenyon, op. cit.*

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Is the New Testament Text trustworthy?

This, however, brings us face to face with a vital question. How far is the text of the New Testament open to doubt? We may be content to accept the estimate of Dr. Hort; he devoted his lifetime to the subject, and he exerted more influence than any other scholar in deciding the text which was adopted as their basis by the Revisers of our English Version. Dr. Hort tells us that if we set aside mere differences of spelling and other comparatively trivial variations, "the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation . . . can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text." * Moreover, no doctrine of Christianity hangs upon disputed readings; for all practical purposes we possess the actual words written by the apostles and evangelists.

The Effects of Printing.

Few events have made so profound a difference to the world as the invention of printing. To begin with, it has got rid of the errors of the scribes. When a book is once for all set up correctly in type, copies can be multiplied which are identical, page by page and letter by letter. The medieval Jews set immense store by the minute accuracy of their manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures, and they were prompt to realize this wonderful virtue of the press. In their synagogues they held thanksgiving services for the new discovery; and the Jews in Italy had printed the Hebrew Old Testament nearly thirty years before the New Testament first appeared

* *Westcott and Hort: The New Testament in the Original Greek. Vol. II. Introduction and Appendix.*

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in Greek, and nearly fifty years before the Bible was printed in English.

But besides ensuring accuracy, printing made books cheap and common. It is a most intricate problem to determine the prices at which books in manuscript used to be sold, and then to translate those prices into their present-day equivalents. But among the later Greeks and Romans the business of the copyist was organized on a large scale in cities like Rome and Alexandria and Constantinople, where the expense was lessened by employing slaves trained to act as scribes.

In the early Christian centuries the Bible was widely read and constantly appealed to. We may cite a single illustration from the Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, the famous preacher, who was named "the Golden Mouth" because of his eloquence. In one of St. John Chrysostom's sermons at Antioch * the preacher holds a discussion with a carpenter about the price of the tools of his trade and the price of the books of the New Testament. He tells the carpenter that these books are nothing less than the tools of his spiritual trade, and urges that he ought to be ready to spend as much upon them as he spends on buying tools to earn his livelihood. We may infer that the cost of the New Testament at Antioch towards the end of the fourth century could not have been prohibitive for an artizan.

On the other hand, Dr. S. R. Maitland† computed that to copy out our English Bible, at the rate at which law stationers in London paid their writers sixty years ago for common fair-copy on paper, would cost between £60 and £70 for the

* *Hom. iii. de Lazaro.*

† *The Dark Ages*, p. 202.

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writing only, and further that the scribe must be expert and industrious to perform the task in much less than ten months. Hallam, the historian, estimated that the average price of books in Europe was reduced by four-fifths through the invention of the press. In recent years the cost both of printing and of paper has steadily diminished, so that within living memory books of all sorts have become amazingly cheap. The Bible Society exists to place the Scriptures within the reach of every poor man who can read : and by printing and selling its popular editions at a loss, it has made the Bible to-day the cheapest book that is published.

Since it was founded in 1804, our Society has issued more than 244,444,000 copies of the Scriptures.

HAVE YE NEVER READ?

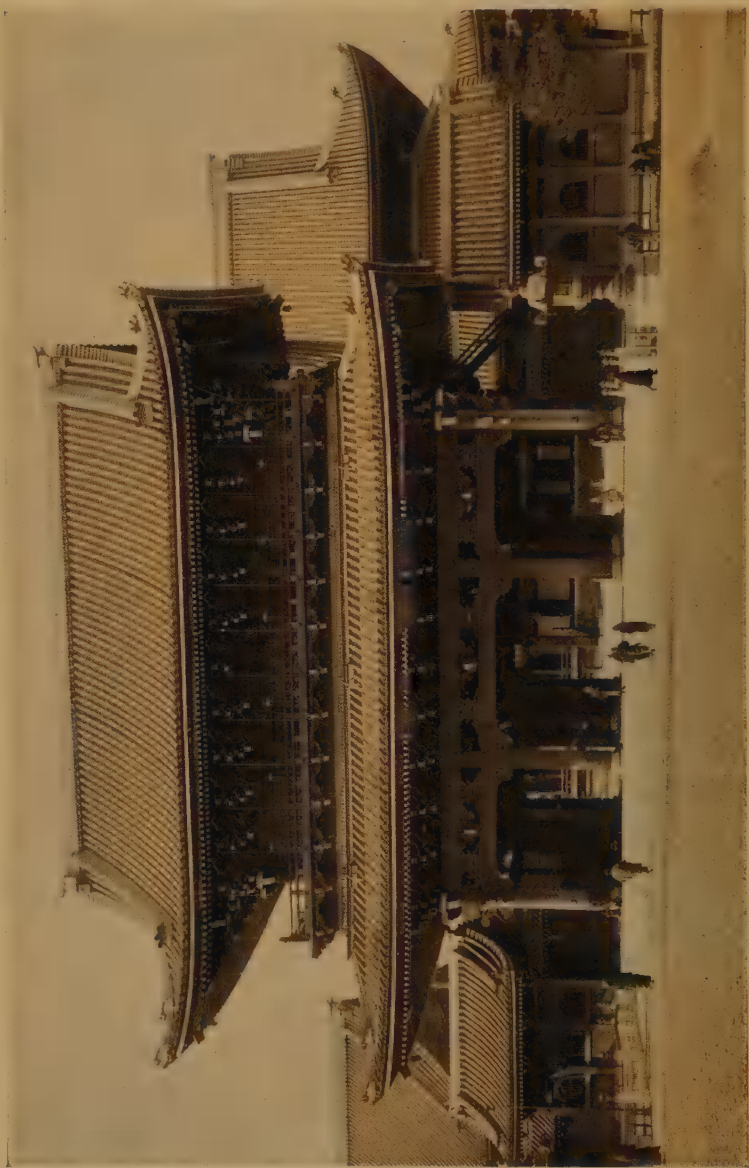
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JACK CADE : “ *Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school : and whereas, before, our forefathers had no other books but the score and the tally, thou hast caused printing to be used, and, contrary to the King, his crown and dignity, thou hast built a paper mill. . . .*”

LORD SAY : “ *Ignorance is the curse of God, Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.*”

SHAKESPEARE : *King Henry VI, Second Part, IV : 7.*

AMONG the changes which are creeping over mankind the most significant and momentous of all attract little public attention. There is one change which moves on without sound of trumpet, while it is quietly transforming the human race. Between four and five centuries ago a cluster of astonishing events took place which altered the aspect and outlook of the world. Columbus discovered a new continent beyond the western ocean. Out of a dim forgotten past the buried classical civilization came to light, and “Greece arose from the dead, with the New Testament in her hand.” And then, more wonderful still, a printing press was set up in the Rhine valley. By the miracle of the printed page ideas began to be sown broadcast over Europe. Truth and knowledge came to be the inheritance not merely of scholars and clerics, but of every clown who knew



RELIGIOUS ZEAL IN JAPAN.

THIS NEWLY-ERECTED GATE OF A JAPANESE TEMPLE HAS COST £67,000.

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how to read. The intellectual and spiritual revolutions which transformed the Middle Ages into our modern world would have been impossible without the type with which Gutenberg and his craftsmen printed their first books in the city of Mainz.

Books, however, convey no meaning to the unlettered. Until you can read, the most learned and magnificent encyclopædia is no more to you than waste paper. And generation after generation passed away before the art of reading became at all general among common people. In the eighteenth century John Wesley found that poor men in England were deplorably untaught. Many persons who are still living recollect the old custom in our country churches and chapels of giving out hymns two lines at a time; that was done because for so many of the peasants and ploughmen and shepherds a hymn-book, like every other book, was useless and without meaning. Only during the last forty years, since the Education Act of 1870 sent every child in the country to school, have Englishmen really turned into a nation of readers.

Three-quarters of a century ago Henry Brougham, as he then was, declared in the course of a famous speech: "The schoolmaster is abroad, and I trust to him, armed with his primer, against the soldier in full military array." Brougham's faith has only in part been justified; but to-day the schoolmaster is certainly abroad as he never was before throughout Europe, as well as in not a few regions which we think of as only touching the fringe of civilization. The world is gradually learning to read.

Consider, for instance, those teeming Asiatic races which make up more than half the human family.

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In Japan almost every child attends an elementary school. At Tokyo, the most populous city in the Far East, over a million volumes each year are taken out by borrowers from the Imperial Library. In the ranks of the Japanese armies, the *Standard* war correspondent confessed that he could not find a single illiterate soldier. Backward European peoples, like the Portuguese and the Italians, fall far below this high level; yet even among them education is gaining ground. In Italy five million new voters were enfranchised last year, and as one result it is expected that *analfabetismo*, or illiteracy, will begin rapidly to disappear.

In the vast empire of Russia ignorance remains the rule rather than the exception; among the subjects of the Tsar who are over nine years of age only 30 per cent. can read and write. But education filters down among Russian *moujiks*. From the valley of the Volga we have this report regarding the Chuvash Tatars, for whom the Bible Society recently published the New Testament in Chuvash: "The parents are to a large extent illiterate, but they desire education for their children, and gladly send them, girls as well as boys, to school. The consequence is that there is very little illiteracy in the younger generation. The parents willingly purchase copies of the Scriptures for their children to read." In Siberia, where fresh immigrants settle sometimes at the rate of half a million in a year, the Government is opening new village schools, and a People's University has been erected at Tomsk.

Turning to that great possession which is the chief glory and burden of the British Empire, we find that according to the new census India

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contains more than 300,000,000 people, who speak at least a hundred and fifty languages and dialects. Lord Curzon reminds us, however, that whereas 95 per cent. of the people of Japan can read and write, 95 per cent. of the people of India can do neither. Yet even in India about a million new readers are leaving the Government schools annually. The Emperor-King's address at the Delhi Durbar showed how deeply the problem of extending primary education preoccupies the Indian administration.

Last year the Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab pointed out that the proportion of boys attending school in the Panjab had risen to 17 per cent., compared with 13 per cent. five years earlier, and 5 per cent. thirty years earlier. From Cochin, the Rev. J. H. Bishop of the C.M.S. reports that "education is rapidly increasing throughout the State. There is a demand for literature. The people are far more willing to buy Gospels than they used to be." Burma is the best-educated part of India, for it possesses an indigenous system of free instruction; in every village yellow-clad Buddhist monks teach the boys to read, and thus often become unconscious schoolmasters unto Christ. The principal of a large high-school in Upper Burma writes: "I sold 75 Burmese New Testaments to Buddhist schoolboys. In most cases they saved up their 'tuck' money to pay for them, and displayed every symptom of delight in the books. That the boys read the Bible has been evidenced in their weekly debating society, when texts from the Bible have been quoted by Buddhist boys who would also in the same speech quote the *Pitakās*."

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In Ceylon, many of the villagers are still unable to read. Hence the primitive method of memorizing is sometimes resorted to; meetings are held at which verses of the Bible are taught to the listeners, who learn to repeat them by heart. Eastern peoples have, as is well known, remarkable memories, and the time may come when many will repeat or chant a whole Gospel, as the Sinhalese priests recite their ancient Buddhist law.

In China, learning has been held in honour for thousands of years. Indeed, the Chinese were educated and artistic when our ancient British ancestors dressed in blue paint. Although a boy in China must spend several years in mastering the formidable characters before he can read at all fluently, yet to-day there is hardly a village throughout that immense republic which does not contain readers. And in the sudden *renaissance* of China no symptom is more impressive than the popular thirst for new knowledge. Schools for teaching "Western learning" are springing up everywhere. Hundreds of Chinese newspapers and journals have been established during the last few years; and all sorts of European books, from *Heroes and Hero Worship* to *La Dame aux Camélias*, are now translated and published in China. The desire for the Christian Scriptures was never so eager and universal. The Bible House at Shanghai is literally embarrassed by demands for fresh editions. The most remarkable fact in the Bible Society's experience during 1912 was surely this: taking its whole circulation throughout the world, for every two copies of the Scriptures which it sold in English, it sold three copies in Chinese.

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When we consider the growth and progress of Christian missions we recognize that to-day they are all "educational missions," to a greater or less degree. Here are three instances from the Dark Continent. In Uganda, the common name given to an inquirer is "reader," and the C.M.S. missionaries have recently decided that no convert shall be baptized until he possesses a copy of the New Testament in his own tongue. Connected with the Livingstonia Mission of the U.F. Presbyterian Church, south-west of Lake Nyasa, there are now over 500 schools with nearly 40,000 pupils. In Natal the Government requires the study of Holy Scripture in all native schools. Last year, after considerable delay owing to the difficulty of completing the revision, 7,000 New Testaments in Zulu arrived at the Bible Society's depôt in Durban and were disposed of in four days, while 2,000 additional copies were needed to meet the demand.

The reports of Roman Catholic missions show that they are paying more attention than ever to education. Their mission schools to-day claim 190,000 pupils in Africa, 138,000 in China, 75,000 in Indo-China, Siam, and Malaya, and 250,000 in India and Ceylon.

We have no space to continue this fragmentary survey. In many countries the masses of the people still remain incredibly ignorant. For Egypt there are no reliable statistics, but perhaps about 6 per cent. of the population can read. In some of the great islands of Malaya the proportion is as low as 1 per cent. In Brazil, which covers a wider area than the United States, probably two-thirds of the adults are illiterate. Across the bleak mountain plateaux of Bolivia, among 2,000,000 inhabitants it is estimated

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that only about 200,000 can read and write. But all over the world dawn is breaking amid the gross darkness, and new multitudes everywhere are entering on their franchise in the kingdom of knowledge. During the last fourteen years the Bible Society has published versions of some part of the Scriptures in a hundred new languages and dialects; and it is safe to say that all these new versions are being read and studied and pondered in remote corners of the earth.

When we scan the horizon for signs of spiritual progress, we may recognize amid gloomy storm-clouds some shining omens of hope. There is much, indeed, in the air we breathe which chills and depresses the Church's faith. We who are Christ's must struggle against the dead weight of secularity, the insolence of luxury, the spirit of aggressive militarism, the cruel selfishness which competition can breed and foster. Yet notwithstanding these evil powers, we detect in many countries and in many souls an undercurrent of recoil towards God. Disillusioned and disappointed with "civilization" and "progress," men are turning away from the things of sense to the things of the spirit. In unexpected quarters there are symptoms of deepening seriousness—and not the least significant is this: the world to-day is far more open to God's Book, and far more eager for God's Book, than ever before.

The growing desire for the Scriptures appears in the fact that last year the Bible Society had to issue double as many volumes as it sent out sixteen years ago. This enormous demand is rapidly increasing, and there are plain signs that it will

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advance more rapidly still. We look forward to a day, not far distant, when we shall be distributing in China alone as many books as we now provide for the human race. The kind of reading on which our Lord laid most stress was reading the signs of the times. Here, before our eyes, is this prospect of the world at school, learning how to spell out the printed pages of the Gospel. Such a prospect may well inspire our friends with fresh courage and sacrifice, as they recognize what immense and sacred opportunities are opening out before us in the near future. As the Bible Society sells its cheap editions at far less than they cost, its funds are drained by its success, and it urgently needs more money. Hitherto, by God's good hand upon our Society, it has held on its way unchecked. It has refused no calls or claims in fulfilling its mission. And we take heart to believe that the gifts of Christian people will respond to the world's hunger for the Scriptures.

HAVE YE NEVER READ?

IN YOUR MOTHER TONGUE

*"This Book is to be written in the simplest language,
that all may understand it."*

MARTIN LUTHER, *letter of 30th March, 1522.*

THE grand barrier which hinders human intercourse is created by the confusion of human speech. A man apprehends slowly and painfully what comes to him clothed in the garb of a foreign language; but he will be ready to welcome into his mind a message which appeals to him in the words which he learned from his mother's lips. The spirit and genius of each people are manifested in their native speech. The Arabs have a proverb which declares that "every new language has a new soul." And no stranger can come into actual contact with folk of another nation until he has mastered their tongue. Hence it has been one chief concern of the Christian Church that Holy Scripture shall be rendered into the languages of the world. For more than a hundred years the British and Foreign Bible Society has performed its most important function by promoting, encouraging, and carrying out the translation and revision of the Bible. The value of organized co-operation in this work can hardly be exaggerated. Besides effecting economy in money and labour, it secures the highest quality of translation from the

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best available scholarship in each language. New versions are aided and controlled by the collective experience of experts. And unity in the mission field is attained, so that rival versions may not divide and distract native Churches.

Quaint and curious are the pitfalls among which missionaries find themselves entangled when they set out to translate the Gospel for the first time into the speech of some barbarous tribe, with all its strange limitations and bewildering complexities. In Central Africa, Mr. Daniel Crawford tells us that he discovered verbs with twenty-three tenses, and nouns with nineteen genders. Dr. George King, the Anglican Bishop in Madagascar, has described the difficulties of the Malagasy version of the Bible, on account of the limited acquaintance of the islanders with many things mentioned in Scripture: for instance, they had no notion of what a bear was like, though they knew all about locusts.

Mr. Crawford records some picturesque Bantu equivalents for Biblical phrases. The title of the Book of Acts becomes "Words concerning Deeds"; the Lord's Table is described as "the Feast of Memories" or "the Table of Tears." Eternity is called "the lifetime of God Almighty"; and the sentence in the Psalm, "Our times are in Thy hand," is rendered comprehensively "All my life's whys and whens and wheres and wherefores are in God's hand."

From his experience in Belgian Congo the Rev. J. H. Weeks, of the Baptist Missionary Society, describes how hard it often is for a translator to lay hands on the right word he needs.

"I wanted the word for table, so I tapped with my finger on the table in front of me, and asked half a dozen boys who were

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standing round, 'What is this?' One boy said it was *dodela*, another *etanda*, another *bokali*, another *nlele*, and another *meza*. Apparently a rich language, to possess five names for a single object! Next day I told a boy to fetch the *bokali*, and he looked at me in astonishment. When I came to check the words, I found that *dodela* meant to tap, that *etanda* meant a plank, that *nlele* meant a cloth, that *meza* meant a table, while *bokali* meant hardness; so I had told the boy to fetch the 'hardness.'

Still more difficult is it to find the right terms for abstract ideas, such as conscience, honesty, or faith. Indeed, the translator must often decide whether it is simpler to take an old word and ennoble its meaning, or to introduce an altogether new term. While Mr. Weeks was translating St. Matthew's Gospel, he wanted the equivalent for "spirit." Now his negroes had two words: *elimo*, which means embodied spirit, the spirit dwelling in a living person; and *mongoli*, which means disembodied spirit, the ghost of a dead person. Had he adopted the first term, the natives would have asked, "In what is this *elimo*? How can it come out of him, and still be *elimo*?" If he had used the second, they would have asked, "Is God dead, that His spirit is now a *mongoli*? And where does this *mongoli* dwell, in the river as a water-spirit, or in the bush as a forest-spirit?" The missionary, therefore, turned to the original derivation of "spirit," which comes from the Latin *spiritus* or "breath"; and he found a native word, *mpema*, which means "breath." Then, in his teaching, he clustered round *mpema* all that Christians have to teach concerning the Spirit of God.

The Rev. Copland King, of the Anglican New Guinea Mission, who has just rendered St. Luke's Gospel into Binandere, tells us that the seat of

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emotion is considered by this Papuan tribe to be the throat, not the heart. Hence "bad throat" means sorrow, a throaty man is a wise man, and "to take the throat" means to love. In St. Luke vii. 45, "Thou gavest me no kiss" had to be translated "Thou didst not smell my nose." There is no word which means "forgive," which had to be translated by "forget" or "do not punish." About a dozen years ago the readers of this Gospel were using stone weapons and practising cannibalism; but last Christmas Day, for the first time, the Holy Communion was celebrated in the Binandere language.

Such illustrations—and they might be multiplied by scores and hundreds—point to the immense toil and research and patience which are crystallized in every version of the Bible. Not many years before the Bible Society was founded, a distinguished English orientalist declared publicly that it was impossible for the Scriptures ever to be translated into Chinese. In the light of that statement, the new catalogue of Chinese editions which has just been issued from the Bible House at Shanghai is indeed a remarkable document; for it enumerates Bibles, Testaments, and separate Scripture Portions in the languages and dialects of China, published by our Society in 470 different varieties of character, type, and binding. Scripture is absolutely unique in one particular: it is capable of being translated into all the languages of mankind without losing its majesty and tenderness and spiritual power. Into whatever barbarous tongue you render the New Testament, it seems to fit that tongue as if it had been made for it: it *was* made for it.

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Ten New Versions.

During the past twelve months versions of the Gospel in ten new forms of speech have been added to the Bible Society's list.

St. Mark's Gospel has been published in *Taungthu* for a race of swarthy hillmen scattered along the eastern borders of Lower Burma: this Gospel is printed in a modified form of Burmese character, and is being used by Wesleyan and Baptist missions.

St. Matthew's Gospel has been issued in *Lisu* and St. Mark's in *Laka* for aboriginal tribes among the mountains of south-west China, who are allied to the Hwa Miao. Out of these kindred peoples, who were till recently demon-worshippers, the China Inland Mission and the United Methodist Mission have baptized thousands of converts. Last year twenty-seven mule-loads of Gospels in Miao, Lisu, and Laka were sent up by mountain tracks to the C.I.M. station at Sapushan; a letter came back to say that the 8,500 books had all been disposed of in two hours and that the tribesmen were asking for more.

At Singapore, the Book of Acts has been published in *Baba Malay*, the modified form of Malay current among those masses of Chinese who have been born and bred in the Straits Settlements.

St. Luke's Gospel in *Binandere*, one more of the languages of Papua, has been printed at the request of the Bishop of New Guinea for the Anglican New Guinea Mission. Binandere is the sixteenth language in which our Society has published the Scriptures for the people of New Guinea.

At the request of the Australasian Methodist



Photo by

G. Lassave.

TRIBESMEN NEAR ASSOUAN.

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Missionary Society, St. Mark's Gospel has been published in *Omo*, a dialect spoken in the Bismarck Archipelago on that island which the Germans call Neu Mecklenburg, and which was formerly known as New Ireland.

The four Gospels have appeared in the *Kunuzi* dialect spoken by Nubians on the Upper Nile between Assouan and the third cataract, who are being evangelized by the German Sudan Pioneer Mission.

St. Mark's Gospel in *Kipsigis* has been printed for tribesmen in British East Africa living north and south of the railway-line to Uganda. This version is due to a member of the Lumbwa Industrial Mission.

St. Mark's Gospel has also been issued in *Luba-Lulua* for negroes in the Kasai district of Belgian Congo. It has been translated by a missionary of the Southern Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. In his new book, *Dawn in Darkest Africa*, the Rev. J. H. Harris writes: "Travellers in the Kasai territories of the Congo are generally first aware of their approach to human habitations by hearing the distant thud, thud of the rubber mallets, which is a feature of almost every village of that region."

In addition to these, our Society has combined with the National Bible Society of Scotland to publish a version of the New Testament in *Esperanto*, produced with great care under the auspices of the Esperanto Association. The first edition of 5,000 copies of this New Testament has been exhausted, and a second edition has now been issued. The book will have real missionary value, as it will bring the New Testament to the notice of many persons who would not be likely to study it except in this "universal

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language." We append the Beatitudes, as rendered into Esperanto.

Feliĉaj estas la malriĉaj en spirito, ĉar ilia estas la regno de la ĉielo.

Feliĉaj estas la plorantaj, ĉar ili estos konsolitaj.

Feliĉaj estas la mildaj, ĉar ili heredos la teron.

Feliĉaj estas tiuj, kiuj malsatas kaj soifas justecon, ĉar ili satiĝos.

Feliĉaj estas la kompatemaj, ĉar ili ricevos kompaton.

Feliĉaj estas la kore puraj, ĉar ili vidos Dion.

Feliĉaj estas la pacigantoj, ĉar ili filoj de Dio estos nomataj.

Feliĉaj estas tiuj, kiuj estas persekutataj pro justeco, ĉar ilia estas la regno de la ĉielo.

Three New African Bibles.

The immense work of completing partial versions of the Scriptures, and of improving imperfect versions, is constantly being carried forward by missionary scholars, linguists, and native assistants in many different lands. Here, only a few examples can be mentioned. As we have watched Moslem power recoil and collapse in Europe, it is of special interest to learn that this last year our Society has helped to build new barriers against the advance of Islam in Africa. It has issued the complete Bible for the first time in three more African versions.

The Bible in *Eastern Nyanja* (or Chi-Nyanja) has been published in one volume by the Bible Society for the use of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa. This version is practically the work of Archdeacon W. P. Johnson, of Likoma, Lake Nyasa. Our Society supplies all the versions of the Scriptures needed by the U.M.C.A., and as early as 1891 had printed the Swahili Bible, translated by Bishop Steere and Archdeacon Hodgson.

The following letter, dated February 12, 1913, has

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been received at the Bible House from the Rev. Duncan Travers, Secretary of the U.M.C.A.

“It was reported to the General Committee at their meeting yesterday that the Bible Society had printed in Chi-Nyanja the whole of the Bible, and that an edition of 2,000 copies had been issued, of which 1,950 copies had been despatched to the Bishop of Nyasaland. The Committee desired me to forward from them an expression of their great appreciation of your Society’s generosity, and to say how great is the value they place on this co-operation between the two Societies in furtherance of our Lord’s kingdom in Africa.”

The Bible has also been completed and published in *Nyoro*, for the people of Toro, in the Uganda Protectorate. In this beautiful region, which contains snow-clad mountains higher than any peak in Switzerland, the C.M.S. mission has thousands of communicants. The whole *Nyoro* version is due to the Rev. H. E. Maddox and his native assistants, one of whom has sent the following letter to the Bible House:

“We are delighted beyond measure, and all the people of our nation are delighted at getting the Word of God in our own language of Lunyoro: we are very grateful. And now we know that there are Christians in Europe who love the Christians of this country, for you have all worked together to do us this most precious benefit in giving us the Word of God in Lunyoro.”

A third African Bible completed and published last year is the *Union Ibo* version. This translation, made under the care of Archdeacon Dennis, of the C.M.S., unifies more or less imperfect versions which had been already published in four different Ibo dialects. It has cost our Society over £2,000, and will find readers among the 3,000,000 Ibo-speaking inhabitants of Southern Nigeria.

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Three more New Testaments.

The New Testament has also been issued for the first time in *Nyasa Nyika*, for the Moravian Mission in Nyasaland. A fresh translation of the New Testament has been finished and printed in *Hausa*, which is by far the most important speech of the Western Sudan, where it is current among perhaps 14,000,000 people. For the Panjab the New Testament in *Musalmani-Panjabi* (in Persian character) has been printed for the first time, and the whole edition was sold out in four months.

Arrangements are in progress to add versions of the Old Testament to the New Testaments already published in *Tibetan*, in the *Canton* and *Taichow* colloquial forms of Chinese, in the *Mombasa* form of *Swahili*, and in *Burmese*.

Revisions.

The revision of versions of the Scriptures already made is going forward in scores of different tongues. This task is carried out as a rule by local committees of linguists and scholars, generally under the Bible Society's auspices and frequently at its expense. We have no space to describe the revisions which are now proceeding in some of the great languages of the East—in India and China and Japan. A few examples may be given of revisions nearer home.

The *Bohemian Bible* is one of the most venerable printed versions in the world. Already in 1475, a year or two before Caxton set up his press at Westminster, the New Testament in Bohemian had been printed at some place unknown, possibly at Nuremberg. The translation had been made at a much earlier date, and revised early in the fifteenth century by the



Photo by

J. C. White.

THE DALAI LAMA'S PALACE AT LHASA.

THE UPPERMOST WINDOWS BELONG TO HIS APARTMENTS.

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famous reformer, Johann Hus. This New Testament was issued in 1475, and the complete Bible was printed at Prague in 1488—forty-seven years before Miles Coverdale issued the first edition of the printed English Bible.

Since 1488 the Bohemian Bible has been revised or retranslated more than once. In 1579-93 appeared the first edition of a new translation from the original tongues, known from the place where it was printed as the Kralitz Bible. This is regarded as perhaps the finest classic in Bohemian literature. Recently a very able Bohemian scholar, the Rev. Jan Karafiát, has completed a careful revision of the Kralitz Bible, which has been examined and approved by all the highest authorities on the subject. The Bible Society has gladly agreed to publish this revision, which is passing through the press.

By permission of the Exarch of Georgia, obtained through the office of the Synod of the Georgian Church at Tiflis in the Caucasus, fresh editions of the New Testament, the four Gospels, and the Psalter in *Georgian* are being produced for our Society, and will bear the *imprimatur* of the Georgian Church. The proofs have been read by a learned Georgian priest, designated for this purpose by the Synod, and paid by the Bible Society. The Gospels are published, and the New Testament is passing through the press at Tiflis.

This year is the fifteenth centenary of the invention of the Armenian alphabet, and the fourth centenary of the earliest printed Armenian book. As one way of commemorating this event, the Bible Society proposes to publish a revised edition of the version of the New Testament which has been current

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for a generation past in the *Eastern* or *Ararat* form of modern *Armenian*, spoken south of the Caucasus. A revision has been carried out by an Armenian scholar at Tiflis, and this has now been submitted by our Society for the approval of the Catholicos of the Armenian Church at Etchmiadzin. His Holiness has been pleased to appoint a commission, presided over by Bishop Karapet, to examine this revision.

More than half a century ago the earliest edition of the *Bulgarian* Bible ever printed appeared at the expense of our Society, which has now undertaken the cost of revising this version. However, the outbreak of war in the Balkans has delayed the work. The same cause stopped the printing of the *Albanian* New Testament in the national character, which was in progress at Monastir. Alike in Bulgaria and in Albania the Society's popular versions of the Scriptures have exerted a remarkable influence in awakening and fostering national consciousness.

During the past year our Society has published two new and corrected editions—one of them pocket size—of the revised Icelandic Bible. We learn that in different parts of Iceland eighty depôts have been established for the sale of these editions.

The colloquial speech of modern Jews in Central Europe is known as Yiddish; it is founded on medieval German, modified by Hebrew, and is written in Hebrew character. A fresh revision of the New Testament in *Yiddish*, prepared by a committee of scholars appointed by our Society, has just been published. There are said to be 150,000 Yiddish-speaking Jews in the East End of London, and Whitechapel possesses a Yiddish theatre.

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His many friends will rejoice with Dr. Ginsburg that he has now completed the Book of Psalms in the great edition of the *Hebrew* Bible which he is preparing for the Society. The Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Historical Books down to the end of II Kings are already published; and we earnestly hope that strength will be given him to finish his learned and laborious task.

It is a sign of recent advance in the Far East that requests have come for diglot editions of the New Testament in Chinese and in Japanese, printed side by side with the English Revised Version.

In embossed type for the blind, the Bible Society has now published or circulated the Scriptures in 33 different versions.

The Society's historical list now includes the complete Bible in 111 different languages; the New Testament in 108 more languages; and at least one book of Scripture in 231 other languages. No fewer than 100 new versions have been issued since the present century began.

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THE OPEN BOOK

“He entered, as His custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. . . . And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor;”

LUKE iv. 16-18.

THE Gospels show us that when the Son of Man came, He came both writing and reading. But the Old Testament is the only volume which we know for certain that our Lord ever opened. That Book, however, He must have read and re-read and pored over, if we may say so reverently, until it became part of His own thoughts and feelings, so that its words were always rising to His lips.

Yet few of us realize that probably Jesus Christ could never afford to possess a Bible of His own. For our sakes He became poor indeed. The Hebrew rolls of the Law and the Prophets, written on leather, would be too costly for the cottage of a village carpenter. How was it that He had learned them so well? In our modern English villages a working lad with a passion for music can often get permission to practise on the church organ; and it has been suggested that in the same sort of way our Lord was allowed to study the sacred rolls preserved in the synagogue at Nazareth where He was brought up. And He

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venerated the ancient volume. Constantly He quoted the Scripture, and appealed to the Scripture as the standard which every Jew would accept. Christ's own example must constrain His disciples to accept the Old Testament as conveying an authentic revelation of God.

To us Christians the Bible means much more than the Old Testament could mean to the Jews in our Lord's day. For the Bible embodies and conveys to us the complete message of Redeeming Love. God's self-revelation is summed up in a Person: but all that we know about this Divine Person—His life and teaching, His death and resurrection—we have given to us in the New Testament. Here, as nowhere else, we are face to face with Jesus Christ Himself. He is the supreme Word of God; but it is in these pages that the Word of God becomes articulate. His character is the One Light of the world: but apart from the New Testament record His character has no substance, no features, no reality. On account of this, we often say that Christianity is the religion of the Bible.

The Bible in the Early Church.

Like any other book, the Bible is on principle addressed to everyone. During the first thousand years of the Christian era no instance can be found either of prohibition or of restriction of Bible reading on the part of the Church. On the contrary, the Fathers not only assume that the Scriptures are regularly read in public worship and in private devotion, but they constantly exhort all Christians, high and low, old and young, to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what is written there.

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In the spring of 1912, Professor Harnack published at Berlin his latest work, entitled *Bible Reading in the Early Church*, an English translation of which has recently appeared in London. In this small but deeply interesting and important volume, Dr. Harnack uses his remarkable knowledge of early Christian literature to elucidate the private use of the Scriptures in the first four centuries. No living scholar has higher qualifications for investigating such a problem, and his conclusions may be best stated in his own words :

“According to the present teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, Holy Scripture is the property of the Church as a body, and she—*i.e.*, in the last instance, the Pope—is bound to administer this property dutifully according to her discretion, and to determine how and in what measure Holy Scripture is to be made accessible to the individual Christian. As a result of our investigation we see that this claim of the Roman Catholic Church is an innovation. Neither in the first three centuries nor in the fourth was the Bible in any sense subordinate to the Church ; accordingly, we cannot discover the slightest trace of a belief that the relations of the laity to the Holy Scriptures were different from, and more limited than, those of the clergy, or of any authoritative episcopal ordinance restricting laymen in their reading of the Bible. . . . Holy Scripture and the Church stood side by side as independent entities. The Bible belongs to the individual in the same sense as it belongs to the Church. . . . Protestantism has thus the testimony of the Early Church on its side in not allowing the Church to dictate the relations between the individual and Holy Scripture.”

Thus Dr. Harnack emphatically endorses the view that the Reformation, in placing the Bible in the hands of every Christian layman, only returned to the simple confidence of the primitive Church.

The Reformation and the Bible.

The attitude of the great Reformers to the Bible was the outcome of their Christian experience. They had an intense sense of the personal character of Holy Scripture. In God's Book they met the revelation of God's saving grace, which their own deepest

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experience attested and confirmed. "God Himself," cried Luther, "speaks with us in the Holy Scriptures." There is a living unity in revelation, and a solidarity in the experience of God's people. "In the Word thou shouldst hear nothing else but thy God speaking to thee." The supreme and final reason why every Christian should read the Bible lies here—that just as every one should speak to God as often as possible, so he should listen to God as often as possible. In countless passages the Fathers * put *oratio* (praying) and *lectio* (reading) side by side. And the Reformers on this point were at one with the Fathers. The great Reformers said in effect: "In the Bible and only in the Bible we find God drawing near to man, and declaring in Christ His will for our salvation. . . . Christianity means Jesus Christ Himself, and we meet Him in the Gospel page as we meet Him nowhere else. . . . We know this by the witness of His Spirit in our hearts, whereby we are assured that none other than God Himself is able to speak such words to our souls."

On such decisive grounds as these every Reformed Church has accepted the Bible as the standard of Christian belief and Christian conduct. And so every Reformed Church puts into men's hands the open Bible, and bids them read it for themselves: "The written Gospel can pierce your consciences, and rouse eternal echoes in your hearts, and authenticate itself in your deepest experience. Here is the charter of Christian faith. Have ye never read?"

In some ancient communions the Bible gradually

* *We need only quote Cyprian, who writes to Donatus (c. 15): "Sit tibi vel oratio assidua vel lectio; nunc cum Deo loquere, nunc Deus tecum."*

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came to be treasured as a relic, reserved for the priests to read, while laymen might only kneel and kiss its jewelled covers. The Holy Book was left unopened, until in the course of ages it became unreadable by common folk. Every Church in Christendom professes at least to appeal to the authority of the Scriptures ; but in many of their liturgies the Bible is habitually read in some venerable version which can no longer be understood by ordinary worshippers. Thus, the Roman Church reads it in Latin, the Greek Church in ancient Greek, the Russian Church in Slavonic, and the Abyssinian Church in Ethiopic. But the Churches of the Reformation insist boldly that in their worship every man shall hear the Scriptures in the tongue in which he was born.

The Orthodox Church.

The mission of the Bible Society, to put God's open Book into the hands of all God's children, meets with various helps and hindrances in different countries. In Russia both Church and State show us genuine friendship. Last year we purchased more than half a million copies of the Scriptures in Russian or Slavonic from the press of the Holy Synod at St. Petersburg. Throughout the Empire our books are conveyed free of charge and many of our colporteurs receive free passes, by rail and by steamer. Russian bishops and priests give the Bible-seller their blessing and help. For example, at a Cossack settlement in Siberia a colporteur called on the priest, who told his congregation at his next service in the village church : " Brethren, we have among us to-day a man sent our way with copies of the Scriptures.



MINERS AT A SIBERIAN GOLD-FIELD.

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I hope that in each house a copy of the Word of God may be found. We all have need of this Book."

In Servia, in Bulgaria, and in Rumania, the ecclesiastics and parish priests of the Orthodox Church encourage our colporteurs. Throughout the Hellenic kingdom, however, the Scriptures in modern Greek unhappily remain forbidden books.

The Church of Rome.

Wherever it has power, the Roman Church as an organization maintains its inveterate attitude of hostility to the free and open Bible. In Austria, for example, where the Ultramontane spirit and policy are dominant, the sale of the Scriptures is grievously restricted and crippled; in some Austrian provinces it is a legal offence to sell a New Testament in the streets. From countries as far apart as Poland and Peru, and even from Roman mission stations in Ceylon, we have reports of priests who denounce and even destroy vernacular copies of the Bible.

On the other hand, we rejoice to record that efforts are put forth by some in the Roman Church to spread the Scriptures. The Society of St. Jerome, which flourished for a few years under the shadow of the Vatican, has unhappily fallen into disfavour, and its work is now practically paralysed. In France a similar society, *L'œuvre de la diffusion du Saint Evangile*, was founded in 1900 under the patronage of the Bishop of Verdun. The policy which it adopts for circulating the Gospels in French is to reduce their price, specially for poor persons, by means of charitable gifts from the rich and the well-to-do: "There can be no more meritorious alms (*d'aumône plus méritoire*)." This enterprise has been countenanced by more than forty Archbishops and Bishops in France, Germany, Italy, England, Belgium, Switzerland, America, and distant missions. Six editions of the *Quatre Evangiles en un seul*, *Les Actes des apôtres*, have been published in various sizes and at different

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prices. It is impressive and encouraging to learn that one edition has reached 720,000 copies, another has reached its 65th reprint, and another its 75th. We note, however, that these volumes present the text of the Gospels "completed by the data of tradition," the latter being printed between brackets: the "data" include, for example, the legend of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.

Social Democracy.

There are many parts of Europe where the circulation of the Bible is bitterly opposed by those socialists who openly deny God. In England to-day there are not a few earnest Christian workers who profess themselves socialists in politics. But on the Continent socialism assumes a deplorably different colour and temper. In Germany, for instance, where the social democrats in the Reichstag represent 4,000,000 working class voters, it is the universal experience of our colporteurs that social democrats are their most violent opponents, surpassing all others in hatred of the Bible and contempt for its teaching. At Budapest a social democrat denounced our colporteurs: "Why do you come and help the priests by trying to sell that poison?" The answer was: "If the Bible be poison, it is only as an anti-toxin against ungodliness and sin."

The King and the Bible.

Happily, in England a different spirit prevails in all classes, from the humblest to the highest. Last year a letter was published from the King's senior private secretary, dated Windsor Castle, Nov. 18th, 1912, in which Lord Knollys sent to the secretary of the Scripture Gift Mission the following information

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regarding His Majesty: "It is quite true that he promised Queen Alexandra as long ago as 1881 that he would read a chapter of the Bible daily, and that he has ever since adhered to this promise."

* * * * *

Sir W. M. Ramsay has described a primitive Christian gravestone found in Northern Phrygia; it bears the curious legend "Thou shalt not wrong God," inscribed above the outline of an open book, which he considers was meant to represent an open codex of the Bible. Otherwise, he suggests that the book may be intended to symbolize a record of the covenant between God and man; while this book lies open, as though to give an account of the faithfulness with which the covenant has been kept. Both ideas blend in the New Testament, and the covenant which its very name implies. The dead man had mastered the lesson of the world, and his epitaph preaches to each passer-by concerning that strict and solemn account which we must all render. Surely God's open Book warns us that we are wronging Him if we close it, if we refuse to read it, if we withhold it from our fellow-men.

HAVE YE NEVER READ?

PUBLISHING SALVATION

"Never before has the whole earth been thrown open for the way to Christ. And this magnificent Society is taking out its Treasure to the world, doing a work which no one else can do. . . . The world is astir with the arrival of the great Book, and this is due in a vast degree to the work of the Bible Society."—Canon H. SCOTT HOLLAND, *Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford.*

FROM one point of view the Bible Society appears as a great philological institute, whose transactions possess high linguistic interest and importance. In another aspect, the Society may be regarded as a huge publishing business, which distributes its multitudinous editions throughout the world. The Bible House, a few doors away from the office of *The Times*, in Queen Victoria Street, London, is indeed the headquarters of an elaborate organization for printing and circulating books. But each volume which it issues is the text or the translation of one and the same Book; and the Bible Society's business is deliberately conducted on such lines that the larger its output the heavier are its commercial losses. For the Society is a partnership of Christian people, who join hands to propagate the Christian Scriptures. And for every £1 which it expends in producing and sending out its editions, it is content to receive back less than 7s. 6d. as the returns of sales.

PUBLISHING SALVATION

The output from the London Bible House rapidly increases. During 1909 there were sent out 2,260 cases of books, weighing 272 tons; in 1912 the figures were 3,359 cases, weighing 440 tons. Yet only about two-fifths of the Society's publications are produced in England. For obvious reasons of convenience and economy they are printed, as far as possible, in the countries where they will be distributed and read. For example, Spanish Bibles are printed at Barcelona, Italian Bibles at Florence, and Hungarian Bibles at Budapest, while Arabic Bibles come from the press of the American Mission at Beirût. Early in the spring of 1913 editions of the Scriptures, numbering nearly half a million copies, in twenty different languages, were passing through the press in various cities of Central Europe, involving an outlay by the Society of £12,000. Most of our Indian editions are produced in India, where the annual circulation has risen to a million copies; most of our Chinese, Japanese, and Korean editions are printed in Japan. Of the Society's total issues 84 per cent. are in languages other than English.

But it is not sufficient to print great editions of the Scriptures in so many different versions. They must be brought within reach of their readers. For the storage and issue of its books the Bible Society maintains depôts in more than a hundred of the chief cities of the world.

A British statesman has pointed to the growth of great cities, at a rate more rapid than that of the countries to which they belong, as one of the most remarkable facts of recent years, fraught with serious consequences. "It is especially visible in the newest countries. In New South Wales the

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population of Sydney is nearly two-fifths that of the whole State; in Victoria, that of Melbourne more than two-fifths. In California two great cities, San Francisco and Los Angeles, have one-third of the whole population. The same tendency is apparent in South America. Of the whole population of Argentina one-fifth dwell in the city of Buenos Ayres."*

During the last few years a considerable proportion of the Bible Society's Centenary Fund has been devoted to providing suitable premises for the Society's work at various important centres outside England.

Among these cities we may mention: Port Said, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Bangalore, Lahore, Simla, Colombo, Rangoon, Maymyo, Singapore, Canton, Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin, Yunnanfu, Newchwang, Mukden, Chang Chun, Seoul, Kobé, Manila, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth (W.A.), Cape Town, Johannesburg, Vancouver, and Winnipeg. At nearly all these centres the Society had been previously paying rentals for premises held on uncertain tenure and steadily increasing in cost.

In Jerusalem our depôt, which is situated outside the Jaffa Gate and near the Russian Monastery, sent out last year 7,424 volumes in 34 different languages. These include Gospels and Testaments for the polyglot pilgrims who gather in the Holy City for Easter, and 2,700 copies in Hebrew for the Jews of Palestine.

At Bagdad on the Tigris, once the magnificent capital of the empire of the Caliphs and still haunted with memories of the *Arabian Nights*, the Bible Society's depôt sent out last year more than 10,000 copies of the Scriptures. A Moslem youth came into the Bagdad depôt and purchased an Arabic

* *The Rt. Hon. James Bryce in "South America,"* p. 322.

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Bible: when paying for it he said, "I have at last got my wishes fulfilled; and for that may Allah bless this Society."

At Johannesburg, our dépôt has issued the Scriptures in a hundred different languages—including Bibles in Icelandic, Armenian, and Maori. It is no small tribute to the Society's usefulness that it has met the needs of people speaking so many tongues in this "Golden City" which twenty-seven years ago had not even a name.

Here is a single curious incident which brings out in vivid relief the cosmopolitan life of modern cities. Last year in Buenos Ayres, which next to Paris is now the largest centre of the Latin races, three young Russians entered our dépôt and obtained versions of the Scriptures in five languages—Russian, Lettish, Lifu, Spanish, and Portuguese.

A World of Change.

This modern world of ours, as Lord Dufferin once said, is like an orange with a very sensitive skin: prick it in one place, and a shiver runs round the whole. An organization like the Bible Society, which has its interests and its agents in half a hundred countries, is naturally affected by whatever perturbs the order and equilibrium of mankind.

During recent months we have watched new chapters begin in the history of nations. To-day the most ancient and most populous State in the world is stretching out hands which grope after God. China is a brimming cup of life, so huge that it could spill a few millions and hardly miss them. Its history and civilization go back unbroken to a date earlier than Moses, earlier than Abraham. Nowhere

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else on earth are the ruts worn so deep. For age after age things went on in China in their old immemorial fashion, until quite lately a most wonderful event has occurred. After so many centuries of contented slumber, China is awake. Napoleon Bonaparte predicted that when once China began to move, the whole world would feel it. The whole world is feeling it to-day. A fresh page of history has been turned over in the Far East, and the future of mankind depends in no small degree on the answer to be given to the question: "What will the new China be like?"

In our time people who are not more than middle-aged have witnessed startling and transforming changes. No one alive, however, can remember any change more astonishing than the immense revolution which has suddenly come to pass in China. No prophet was wise enough to predict it. Englishmen who had spent their lives in the Far East never imagined that the Manchu dynasty, after enduring over two centuries and a half, would collapse with hardly a struggle, and that China would launch out into the depths of a tremendous political and social experiment. Nevertheless the incredible has come to pass. The ancient, jealously-guarded autocracy has given place to a form of democratic government.

It is too soon to attempt to estimate how far the revolution in China has touched the minds or altered the habits of the masses of the population. China remains the oldest State and the oldest civilization on earth, and her people may choose to stand upon the ancient ways and to live their lives much as their fathers lived before them. This much at any rate



Photo by

Underwood and Underwood

A FLOTILLA OF CHINESE JUNKS ON THE PEIHO RIVER, CANTON.

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seems certain. The experiences of the last eighteen months have not diminished, but rather deepened and intensified, the spirit of inquiry about the Gospel. The demand for the Scriptures was never so urgent, never so universal. And it is abundantly clear that the new Government is more friendly to Christian missions than the old. When Christ is preached at the white marble "Altar of Heaven" in Peking, when the rulers of republican China invoke the Christian Church to intercede for their country, we are face to face with a strange and wonderful answer to many sacrifices and many prayers.

On the Amazon.

South American history will stigmatize 1912 as the year when the dreadful story of the Putumayo atrocities was published in Sir Roger Casement's official British report on the methods of rubber collection among the Indians in that region. The Putumayo itself is a vast district almost on the Equator, inhabited mainly by uncivilized but unaggressive Indians. The commercial centre of this rubber trade is the town of Iquitos, on the upper waters of the Amazon. It is difficult to realize that this town, although in Peruvian territory, is much more accessible from Liverpool than from Lima. The Booth Transatlantic steamers sail up the Amazon right through the heart of Brazil as far as Iquitos—2,000 miles from the estuary of the mighty river.

Our Society for some time past had been seriously contemplating an extension of its work in the vast Amazon valley. Early in July, 1912—a week before Sir Roger Casement's report was published

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—the Society appointed Mr. Sydney Smith as its representative in that region. Last autumn he fixed his headquarters at the city of Pará (or Belem), on the southern estuary of the Amazon, from which centre colporteurs have gone out, one of them as far as Manaos. It is intended to work up to Iquitos, and ascend the tributaries of the Amazon, along whose banks the rubber trade is carried on.

Population grown fluid.

We are beginning to perceive that the world itself is being transformed. Political ferment and industrial disturbance and social upheaval are only symptoms of the conflict of ideals. Population itself has become fluid, and migrates by millions. Every year 300,000 Italians leave their native land through the ports of Genoa, Naples, and Palermo. Every year a quarter of a million immigrants enter the Argentine. Settlers are pouring into Canada at the rate of a thousand a day. More rapidly still Russian peasants cross the Urals to make new homes in Siberia. In Burma there are hundreds of thousands of immigrants, speaking Bengali, or Hindi, or Urdu, or Chinese. Amid this confused medley of races and tongues, it is no easy task to provide each stranger in a strange land with the Scriptures in the speech in which he was born.

Consider the problem of immigrants into Canada. Last year 400,000 new-comers entered the Dominion, and of these about 40 per cent. were foreigners unable to speak English. It is said that the present population includes members of 110 nationalities. Now for each of these the Bible Society has published

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a vernacular version of some part at least of the Scriptures. The Christian Church in Canada is able to minister to these polyglot settlers in not more than thirty of their native languages. The Bible Society co-operates with the Church, and ministers also to the remaining eighty nationalities by providing them with the Scriptures in their own tongues. Last year at Quebec alone nearly 60,000 copies were placed in the hands of immigrants, besides 13,000 at Halifax, and 25,000 at St. John, N.B.

At Port Arthur Dr. Welsh, formerly Secretary of the Canadian Bible Society, met a rough-looking man from the lumber-camps—apparently a Pole. But they had no common language, until Dr. Welsh showed him the Polish version of St. John iii. 16: "God so loved the world . . ." Slowly and painfully the man spelt it out. At last his face lit up, he pointed to heaven, and then clasped Dr. Welsh's hand in a mighty grip: the Gospel had broken down the barrier.

The Society now circulates diglot editions of the New Testament, or Gospels, or a Gospel, which give the English version side by side with some one of the following languages: Arabic, Armenian, Bohemian, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Dutch, French, Finnish, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Rumanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Servian, Spanish, Swedish, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Urdu, and Yiddish.

Many of these diglots are issued specially for free distribution among immigrants into British Dominions. Such books serve as an easy primer by

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which the stranger who speaks only his mother tongue can learn English as well; and while he is thus mastering the speech of his new country he becomes acquainted also with the truths of the Gospel. Nothing more surely conduces to national solidarity than a common language and a similarity of ideals.

For Foreign Missions.

The immense missionary value of the Bible Society's work is too obvious to need emphasis. All over the world it serves as the indispensable partner and ally of those who preach Christ to the heathen. It supplies the foreign missions of almost every Reformed Church, and they obtain the books they need on such terms that practically no part of the expense falls on their own exchequer. The Society co-operates with the missionaries in preparing the versions, it prints the editions they ask for in the form they desire, it bears the loss involved in selling the books at reduced prices, and it pays the carriage of the consignments to the remotest mission stations. How much trouble and expense the mere transit involves may be realized by one or two examples. To reach a missionary at some distant station in China, cases of the Scriptures take three months after they leave our depôt at Shanghai, and the freight may cost more than the money value of the books. Not very long ago the Society spent £60 in freight, in order to supply a remote African mission with an edition which had cost £100 to produce in England.

All over the world missionaries are our ablest translators and revisers, our most enthusiastic and untiring helpers; while the Bible Society has no



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The Canadian Pacific Railway

A FARMER IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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such ardent and effective advocates as missionaries at home on furlough. In his diocesan magazine, the Bishop of Birmingham writes: "My own interest in the Bible Society received its greatest impulse from a number of the very staunchest churchmen working in the mission field, old Cuddesdon friends, who passed from prejudice against it into devotion to the Society. They declared with enthusiasm that they owed to it very much of their success with natives." Missionaries understand better than any one else how vital to the health and strength and permanence of a mission is the vernacular Bible. The ultimate missionary problem is to make Christianity indigenous in the soil where it has been planted first of all as an exotic. And, as Lord William Gascoyne Cecil has declared, the Bible in the vernacular is the only book which can teach and train the native Christian Church to grow independent of foreign guidance and control. We have space for only one or two illustrations of missionary gratitude.

From the remote mountain region inhabited by aboriginal tribes in South West China, this confession is sent by the Rev. Robert Powell, of the C.I.M.: "We missionaries, indeed, have great cause to be thankful to the British and Foreign Bible Society. We are not men of money; and it takes money to have these books carried on the shoulders of carriers over these hills, to say nothing of the cost of translation and printing, and the freight for two months' journey inland. We cannot go anywhere, we cannot do anything, without the Bible Society. It is our right hand, and never refuses an appeal for the Scriptures, no matter how much it must pay to get them to us in

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these far-away places. . . . We are looking forward intensely to the time when the whole New Testament will be opened to our people. How one thanks God for the wonderful, almost magical work which the Bible Society is doing in revealing the heart of God to those who need Him so much!"

The Rev. S. Pollard, of the United Methodist Church Mission, Chaotung, Yunnan, writes: "At our last quarterly meeting the Miao preachers asked two of their number to write a letter in Chinese, thanking your Society for your loving help." Here is a translation of the letter:

"The reception of the Gospel by the Hwa Miao of Chaotung, Yunnan, led the Rev. S. Pollard to devise a script for our use and to translate the Gospel into the same, but great was the grace of the B.F.B.S. to bear the cost of the production [of the book].

"When we first received the Gospel of Mark and beheld the clearness of the type and the fineness of the paper, our hearts rejoiced with longing for a knowledge of its contents. Imagine, then, our surprise when the Gospel of Matthew arrived, surpassing far in every respect the first production! The eyes of all were taken from every other object to this, so that the unread, old and young, male and female, all wanted to possess a copy. This will lead to a great increase of those desiring to learn to read. How great is this good!

"Now we Miao, both brothers and sisters, having obtained such great grace ought to have this carved in our heart and on our bones so that to the end of the ages we forget not. Not only so, but when the time comes to write the history of the Miao's rebirth in Christ, certainly shall the goodness of the Society be written in detail, so that the record can never perish, and the generations to come never forget. This is our few words of thanks."

In the Footsteps of Livingstone.

Christians in many lands celebrated last March the centenary of the birth of David Livingstone, the

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heroic missionary pioneer whose life and death proved so fruitful in blessings to Africa. The slavery which he fought against is become well-nigh extinct, and mission after mission has grown up with its spiritual roots in his grave. Now Livingstone was, in the profoundest and truest sense, a "Bible Christian." Under the roof of a humble home at Blantyre, he had been brought up by his father and mother from a child to know the Holy Scriptures. He grasped intensely what so many Christians forget—that the New Testament is above all things a missionary book. Throughout his perilous and toilsome travelling he carried the Bible with him, and he lived by faith in its message. Cut off from the ordinary means of grace, this pilgrim nourished his soul day by day from the deep fountains of the Word of God.

And as Livingstone followed the Bible, so it is wonderful to notice how the Bible has followed Livingstone. One of our own poets has pictured in imagination how a woman could transfigure the fields through which she passed: "her feet have touched the meadows, and left the daisies rosy." It is no poetic fancy, but sober fact, that along the track of Livingstone's weary pilgrimage in Africa the desert has blossomed into versions of the Gospel. He was the path-finder whose trail succeeding missionaries have pursued; and one sure sign of missionary conquest is that so many of those tribes and kindreds among whom Livingstone wandered have now received the Scriptures, each in its own mother tongue.

When David Livingstone landed at Algoa Bay in the spring of 1841 and set foot for the first time on African soil, it is significant that he brought out with him from England a con-

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signment of New Testaments for the Bechuana. Fifteen years earlier Robert Moffat had settled at Kuruman, where, after mastering the language, he soon began to translate the Scriptures. After the Chuana New Testament had been completed, with native assistance, the book was printed in London by the Bible Society, under Moffat's own supervision during his visit to England in 1840. The earliest consignment of this Testament, consisting of 500 copies, was taken out by Livingstone on his first voyage to Africa as a L.M.S. missionary.

When Livingstone entered Africa the Scriptures had been printed in no more than nine African languages. To-day our own Society's list enumerates 112 African versions. In nearly all these tongues no literature existed until they had been first reduced to written form by missionaries, in order that each in turn might become a vehicle of the Gospel. African versions of Holy Scripture stand as so many symbols of missionary sacrifice and trophies of missionary conquest. We call to mind with wonder and thankfulness how the Bible has followed, and is following, in the footsteps of David Livingstone.

From West Africa.

The Bible House was visited in June, 1913, by a number of Nigerian chiefs, some of whom wore picturesque robes of brilliant green, orange, or yellow silk. They had come to London in order to give evidence concerning the conditions of land tenure in Nigeria.

The Committee extended a hearty welcome to its Nigerian visitors. In reply, the Hon. Adegboyega Edun, Government Secretary at Abeokuta, said: "If there is one feeling that we have, it is that this place is the centre of the universe, for from here comes in all languages and tongues the Word of God. The Bible is the greatest national treasure. The effect of the Bible cannot be so easily seen in a country like this, where



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Sudan United Mission.

AN INFLUENTIAL CHIEF IN NORTHERN NIGERIA, WITH HIS DRUMMERS AND TRUMPETERS.

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all is light, as in our country, where there is so much darkness. We pray that God may continue the work which so many are doing here." Prince Bassey Duke Ephraim IX, of Calabar, said: "Without the Bible a nation is no nation. Every civilized country must have the Bible as its key. The Bible has been translated into our language, and it has been very valuable to us."

On the Gold Coast the Wesleyan Methodist Mission ministers to an adult Christian community which numbers over 60,000. The secretary of its Synod wrote to the Bible House on March 4th, 1913: "I am directed by our Annual District Synod assembled at Cape Coast to convey to you its sincerest gratitude for, and appreciation of, the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society on the Gold Coast. . . . The Synod has resolved that early in September a Sunday shall be devoted entirely to the interests of your work. Special sermons are to be preached and collections made in all our circuits. . . . We intend this arrangement to be an annual one, so that we may thus be able in some small measure at least to recognize and to discharge our obligations to the British and Foreign Bible Society."

The Missionaries' Right Hand.

The South African Missionary Association, in connection with its triennial Conference at Cape Town in June, 1912, arranged for a large Missionary Exhibition. We contributed an exhibit of the Scriptures, which contained editions in 220 different languages, and intense interest was created in the Society's enterprise. Among the eager visitors were many missionaries who bore witness to the generous help they had received in their work. The feeling of all was expressed by an aged brother, when he

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exclaimed: "This is indeed marvellous; the Bible Society is the missionaries' right hand."

The Isles of the Ocean.

Most of the islands and archipelagos in the southern seas, which are roughly grouped as Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia, have been more or less effectively evangelized, and now contain 300,000 native Protestant Christians, besides 70,000 Roman Catholics. For the missions which are at work in this polyglot field the Bible Society has now issued some book or books of the Scriptures in 65 different languages, including twelve versions of the complete Bible.

To these pioneer missions books are sent out from London free of charge and carriage paid to the stations where they are needed; there the missionaries sell them at prices which they themselves fix, and any proceeds, after deducting expenses of distribution, are remitted to the Bible House. During the past year more than £1,000 was received in London from Oceania as proceeds of sales of the Scriptures.

Other islanders are not forgotten. Colportage is carried on in the Canaries, the Azores, and Mauritius. During the past twelve months more than 23,000 copies of the Scriptures were sent from London to Jamaica. In Barbados and the adjacent West Indian islands the Scriptures are distributed from Bridgetown, chiefly by means of native colporteurs and Biblewomen, who sell annually about 10,000 English Bibles and 16,000 Testaments.

Even Easter Island, the most lonely and mysterious spot in the Pacific, lying 2,000 miles from the coast of Chile "where is the navel of the seas," receives Spanish Gospels from the Bible Society's dépôt at Valparaiso.

TRAVELLING BIBLEMEN

TRAVELLING BIBLEMEN

"People will seldom read a book which is given them. The way to spread a work is to sell it at a low price."—DR. JOHNSON.

To put God's printed message into the hands of His scattered children the Bible Society has evolved a special type of travelling agent. A quarter of a century ago, when the first colporteur began work in Japan, he was named "The-Holy-Book-to-sell-go-about-man." That expressive Japanese title sums up the duty of our ubiquitous Bible-messengers, who are taking the Scriptures into all the corners of the earth. These humble, faithful men belong to many races and are drawn from many Christian communions, but they have all learned to love the Book they carry. And along the roads and rivers and footpaths of their native countries they pass from town to town and from door to door, offering their cheap little Testaments and Gospels at prices which peasants and coolies can afford to pay.

In recent years corresponding methods have been adopted by certain enterprising business houses. Here are two examples of their sincere flattery of the Bible Society. High among the Andes of Peru, 11,000 feet above the sea, lies Cuzco, the sacred city of the sun, once the capital of the empire of the Incas and still famous for its huge prehistoric ruins. Strings of laden llamas thread the narrow streets, and the inhabitants are mostly Quichua-speaking Indians; but "hardly a house seems without

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a sewing-machine"—the result of a carefully planned business campaign carried on for ten years past by American agents.

Changsha, the chief city of the Chinese province of Hunan, stands on a tributary of the Yangtse River, about a thousand miles from its mouth. Four years ago a trim steam-launch anchored at Changsha, and its crew began to distribute sample boxes of cigarettes from house to house, not only through the city but in all the towns and villages in that vast province—where millions of Chinese, who had never seen a New Testament, were smoking foreign cigarettes. The children of this world are quite as alert and energetic as the children of light.

Our Society employs twelve hundred of its way-faring Biblemen, who were continuously at work throughout last year in nearly every country of the world, and sold altogether 3,750,000 copies of the Scriptures.

The Bible-seller has many varied methods of locomotion. He rides a horse, or a mule, or a donkey, or a camel—or sometimes even an elephant. He travels by rail, or river-steamer, or sampan, or canoe. He and his books are conveyed by sledge across the snow and by camel-cart across the steppe, by a bullock-cart in Java, by a light waggon and horses in Queensland, by a carraton drawn by buffaloes in Luzon. He uses a wheelbarrow in China and a bicycle in Italy, a motor-cycle in Alberta and a motor-launch at Port Said. Oftenest of all the colporteur with his wallet plods on up hill and down dale, climbing lonely mountain tracks, and passing along crowded city pavements; now threading his way under the trailing orchids of a Brazilian forest, now pacing with bare feet among the pale green rice-fields of Bengal.

Randrianjanaka, who is perhaps the most energetic and successful colporteur in Madagascar, has provided himself with

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a bicycle, and is thus able to cover much more ground than otherwise would be possible. He has four or five dépôts, at large centres, from which he gets his supplies of books for the nearest markets. While he is busily selling in one market, a bearer goes on in advance to the next dépôt and prepares his stall at the market for the following day. It is most encouraging to see him rushing about from one place to another with so much enthusiasm in his work. Attached to the seat of the bicycle are parcels of Malagasy Bibles, sold for 1s. a copy. These he carries for roadside customers, so as to be ready for such opportunities as may unexpectedly arise on his journeys. He rings a small bell wherever he alights, and is soon surrounded by children. Then the older people gradually gather about him, and become interested in what he says. Having secured their attention, he speaks to them about the Word of God and its message, and almost invariably manages to sell a few Bibles or Testaments.

The colporteurs of the Bible Society make their way everywhere. Last year they were visiting lumber-camps in Ontario, and lonely homesteads in Queensland, and glass-factories in Bohemia, and rubber-plantations in the Malay Peninsula. They have sold the Scriptures under the shadow of the castle at Heidelberg and in the railway-station at Peking, outside cinematograph shows in Java and among the islands of the Spitzbergen Sea. One man drifted in a canoe down the rapids on the Niger; another rode across wind-swept passes in Bolivia, higher than the summit of the Jungfrau. Spanish colporteurs entered the University of Salamanca. Russian colporteurs disposed of 7,000 books from the Society's kiosk during the great fair at Nijni-Novgorod. Two donkey-loads of Gospels were sold in the city of Timbuktu.

The experiences of these Biblemen are as variegated as their nationality and costume and speech.

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Not seldom they have to face grave danger and persecution. During the revolution in China several colporteurs were robbed of everything they possessed; one had to hide for days in a cave, while his house was burnt by bandits who threatened to kill all Christians. In Burma certain Bible-sellers were denied entrance to a village, being mistaken for Government officials come to enforce inoculation against plague. In the hinterland of Senegambia the Moslem tribesmen regarded our colporteur as a spy sent by the French administrator. In Portugal two colporteurs were charged by the republican guards with being "Jesuits." In Ceylon a colporteur lost himself "in a jungle infested with wild elephants." In Venezuela two of our men were arrested, and set at liberty only by the intervention of the British Minister. In the Bukowina a colporteur was charged with being a Russian spy, and kept in jail for a month. In Albania a Bible-seller was first robbed by Turkish soldiers and then made prisoner by the Greek troops and carried off to Athens. While in Persia, which is given up to rapine, brigandage and anarchy, our colporteurs have gone about literally in peril of their lives.

From Korea the Rev. L. L. Young, of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission, writes: "The work of the colporteurs as a whole has been good, and the usual hardships have been bravely endured. In one of the outlying villages a colporteur was so severely beaten by heathen Koreans that for ten days he was unable to continue selling. He has since been rewarded for his patient endurance by seeing the little church in that place increase in numbers, some of his former persecutors being among the new believers."



Photo by

THE ELEPHANTS' TOILET.

Platé and Co.

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At a village in Venezuela a colporteur was attacked by malignant fever. He quickly lost consciousness; and when he came to himself he found his bed surrounded by a group of people who were discussing how to divide up his property. The local doctor greeted him thus: "*Señor*, you may thank God that you are not selling Bibles in hell. We have no need of your books here; we are all Christians." When he could rise from bed he had to walk with his pack sixteen miles to the next village, crossing and re-crossing a river in flood five times on the way. No wonder he was seized with another attack of fever. Eventually he reached Carácas, worn out and half dead.

Saved by the Book.

During the Chinese revolution, while the city of Tatung in North Shansi was besieged for forty-seven days, our colporteurs had free passage over the walls. They were let down by ropes, and the soldiers were willing to help them up and down. Once when Colporteur Li came near the city the soldiers began to shoot at him, but he quickly took out one of our Gospels and waved it, and the firing ceased. They recognized the book, and knew he was not an enemy or a spy. The officers of the besieging troops were also always kind to our colporteurs, and bought books and told their soldiers to do the same.

Bandits in Brazil.

In the north-west region of the State of Bahia, Colporteur Cyrillo Santa Anna has done much good service. He generally travels without a companion

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through the most backward and lonely parts of this State, which has nearly as large an area as Sweden. Cyrillo describes a daring visit which he made to a band of robbers and assassins, whose chief was a desperate character. After much prayer the colporteur paid his first visit to this man, and conversed with him about the Bible; and the chief, surrounded by followers all fully armed, began to read the Book for himself. Some time afterwards Cyrillo went to visit him again, and found the chief dangerously ill. "It is all true," he said, "that you said to me about the Bible. I know that I must appear before God's judgment seat, and when I think of my past life, so full of evil deeds, I can only weep." "He turned away his head," says the colporteur, "to hide the tears that were running down his face. I told him of the words of Jesus, how He said, *Come unto Me, all ye that labour . . .* and begged him to leave his old life and become a Christian. Some days before he died the chief asked for the story of St. Paul's conversion to be read to him; that was his favourite chapter in the New Testament. Then he said, 'Now I can die, because God has helped me to know of His great love and mercy.'"

The true Spirit.

To be a worthy colporteur is a hard task, impossible to perform without the grace of God. No life involves more wear and tear. The genuine spirit is revealed in a French colporteur's letter: "It is good for us to meet with difficulties. When sales go on without opposition, one is apt to count much on one's own abilities and little upon the Lord. I feel greater joy when I sell struggling than otherwise."

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In the Panjab last year Colporteur Pribhudas sold nearly 6,000 books. He has sent in a short account of his methods, which shows how faith and perseverance characterize every successful Bible-seller.

“When I go to the railway-station in the morning, I at first pray God to help me in spreading His Word, and then I begin my work. Walking from the first to the last compartment, I offer portions of the Bible to almost every passenger, and tell them something about the value of the Gospel. Many men gladly take the books; but many abuse me, for whom I pray that God Almighty may enlighten their hearts. I also pray for those who gladly take the Scriptures, that by reading they may be led into the right path. Often I have been treated very roughly while selling books. Once a Hindu instigated some illiterate Muhammadans by telling them that I was selling books against their religion, and they at once got excited and prepared to beat me. I simply remembered my God, asking His help in my heart; and fortunately a policeman suddenly came to my rescue. Many times people have dealt roughly with me, but I always trusted in my God. I have always been able to sell books by the grace of God . . . I am so unable in knowledge or ability, and am so weak. Always I pray the Lord Jesus Christ to give me His grace that I may always serve Him with heart and soul.”

Seasoned with Salt.

To fulfil his mission the Bible-seller requires to be endowed with no small share of “the three g’s—grace, grit, and gumption.” Often he meets with rough refusals and cynical rebuffs. But many of our colporteurs possess a natural stock of shrewd common-sense as well as homely mother-wit, and they know how to employ both these gifts with tact and patience and charity.

At Borgomanero, near Novara, an Italian woman told the colporteur that she had no need of a Gospel: the parish priest explained it well enough for her.

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"Then why have you just insisted on your boy going into the house to study his lessons? Why should he study? Does not the teacher at school explain everything?" It dawned on the good dame that she, like her child with his lessons, needed to study the Master's teaching, and finally she bought the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John.

"In the Jews' quarter at Jaffa," writes a colporteur, "some one in the crowd bought a Bible. As he was paying for it, a prominent man came up and struck his hand, causing him to drop the volume. I asked why he acted so roughly. He replied, 'Because this book comes from the English, and it is unlawful to read it.' Seeing he was well dressed, I said to him, 'Will you please take off your shoes, and this hat from your head, and this suit of clothes?' 'Why?' he asked. 'Because they are all of English manufacture, and it is unlawful to wear them.' The people began to laugh, while the objector walked away. Then my customer paid for his Bible."

In the valley of the Loire, Colporteur Le Dréau came across a village wedding, and stood watching the dancers. When the dance stopped he brought out his books, and at once had thirty people gathered round him. "You had better dance with the bride," they said. "My books speak of a wedding at Cana, when Jesus changed the water into wine." Soon they were examining St. John's Gospel. "That time is past," some said ironically. "Yet," he answered, "God does change water into wine, since rain makes you have wine; without it you would have no wine at all." The answer pleased them. "My books speak of other things too: of the duties of husbands and wives," he continued, and read them

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extracts from Ephesians and Proverbs. "Your books are fine," said the bride, and then, turning to her husband, she said, "Buy me one," which he did. Ten of the party bought copies of St. John. Others urged the colporteur, "Come to our village; you are sure to sell your books."

In Tunis our colporteur entered an inn whose landlady is a staunch Roman Catholic. Some infidel workmen, who denied the existence of God, scoffed at this woman's declaration of faith. They jeered at her still more when she drew from her bosom a small wooden crucifix and said, "Here is my God whom I keep near my heart." Then turning to the colporteur she said, "Please defend me against these unbelievers, who dare to mock at the holy cross." Accordingly he took his Bible and read several passages showing the existence of God, His nature and His attributes. When he had finished the men applauded; one of them bought a Bible and another a New Testament; but the landlady herself would not be persuaded to accept the Scriptures.

On a Syrian Threshing-floor.

Here are two vignettes from the experience of a colporteur in Syria. "In one of the Lebanon villages, as it was the time of harvest, I went down to the threshing-floor and offered my books to the men gathered there. After looking at them, they refused to buy, because they found no mention of St. Mary the Virgin. I said, 'You are mistaken; let me read to you.' Then sitting down I read aloud the first chapter of St. Luke, the visit of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin, and the news of the coming Saviour. They were satisfied, and I sold a dozen New Testa-

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ments at the threshing-floor, while the same evening a man came to my lodging and bought a Bible."

"A French battleship was lying at Beirût, but the officer in charge would not give me permission to sell. I spoke to several of the sailors, but they all replied that they did not care for such books. Then one sailor died, and was brought on shore at Beirût for burial. I resolved to make another attempt. Since they would not let me go on board with my bag, I filled my pockets with books and went as a visitor. When I spoke to some of the sailors about death and eternity, they were touched, and when I offered them the Scriptures, some bought copies, others said that they had no money, but that they would pay for a Gospel with a small medal of St. Mary. I brought away nine of these medals in exchange for as many Gospels."

"O taste and see."

From Cairo a colporteur writes: "One evening I entered a *café* where two men were sitting, and offered them a Gospel. One of them replied, 'This Gospel is of no use to us.' I asked, 'Have you ever read it?' He answered, 'Never.' 'Then,' said I, 'how do you know it is of no use?' and pointing to an orange that he was eating, I added, 'You have tasted that orange, but I have not. You say the orange is sweet; I say it is bitter—which of us is likely to be right?' 'I am,' said he. 'Then,' said I, 'it is the same with this Book. You have never in your life read it. I have read it many times, and I tell you it is good. You say 'No.' Which of us is wrong?' He answered laughingly, 'I am,' and handed me an orange. Both he and his friend



MARONITE PEASANTS IN THE LEBANON.

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bought Gospels. On parting I said, 'You read my book and see if it is good, and I will eat your orange and see if it is sweet.'

"I found five respectable men sitting in a barber's shop, and handed each of them the Gospel of St. Matthew. They remarked, 'This is a Gospel, and we are Moslems, connected with the Red Crescent Society; we shall be glad if you will give us something for the wounded.' I asked them, 'Does the Red Crescent Society help wounded Italians as well as Turks?' They said, 'No, the Turkish army only; the Italians have their own Society, the Red Cross.' I replied, 'The Red Cross Society, I know, helps the wounded, irrespective of their nationality or religion.' They said, 'How can we help Christians who become our enemies and fight against us?' I opened a Testament at St. Matthew v. 44, and said, 'Listen to what God says in His Book,' and I read aloud to the end of the chapter. Then they said, 'This is indeed a good book,' and four of them bought copies of the Gospels bound together, while for the fifth man I procured an Arabic Bible."

Off to the War.

From the Sudan a colporteur writes: "At Khar-toum railway station I found the train crowded with Greeks who were leaving for their own country to take part in the war in the Balkans. Filling my bag with the Scriptures in modern Greek, I told them that, as they were setting out on so perilous a journey, it was a good occasion to take with them a copy of the Word of God. Nearly every man bought a copy of the Gospels bound with the Psalter."

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At Trier, on the Moselle, Colporteur Arndt spent part of the winter working among the soldiers quartered in the garrison, and over 530 copies of the Scriptures were sold to the young warriors keeping their *Wacht am Rhein* in that ancient Roman city. We are grateful to the German military authorities at Trier for their kindness to our colporteur. As a rule the officers, especially those of higher rank, showed themselves exceedingly friendly.

At Vladivostock.

On the Pacific coast of Siberia, our veteran Colporteur Tchebikin, who has served in the Russian army, worked with his usual fidelity and success. In May, 1912, he again reached Vladivostock, where he was able to renew his permit to visit the citadel on "Russian Island," which guards the entrance to Vladivostock harbour. Here are many forts and barracks, and Tchebikin could move among the soldiers with great acceptance.

In June, Tchebikin landed at the Siberian military outpost called Novo-Kieffskoi, situated just on the frontier of Korea, 80 miles by sea from Vladivostock. "I had never before visited this lonely outpost," he writes. "Thank God, I had no difficulty in procuring the necessary permit. I exhausted my stock of Scriptures in a few days. I sold several New Testaments to the officers here, who gave me every assistance in my endeavours to go over all the barracks. The soldiers often told me how glad they were to be able to purchase the Gospel, and many a man borrowed money from some comrade in order to buy a copy."

Unfortunately, when boarding the steamer at

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Khabarovsk, Tchebikin was robbed of his passport and other documents, including a second-class free pass for the steamer on which he had just secured his place. However, the Russian bishop, as well as the Governor in Vladivostock, at once kindly issued him fresh papers, and by degrees he is again acquiring all his former military permits.

In French Vineyards.

Wherever men most do congregate, at fairs and festivals and railway-stations, at the shrines of pilgrimage and on the quays of sea-ports, the Bible-seller finds his opportunity. Last year our colporteurs were busy at German watering-places and at Spanish fairs. In France Colporteur Charvet passes from fair to fair, as another would go from village to village. During 1912 he covered over 11,000 miles. Every autumn he goes among the labourers who come from all quarters to gather in the vintage—folk often of the worst character, the refuse of society and paupers without any fixed occupation, French, Spaniards, and Italians. At night they group themselves round camp-fires to prepare their meals. By the light of the fire over which the soup is being cooked, Charvet reads them a few passages of Scripture. "It is rarely," he says, "that I do not sell Gospels, or even Testaments, to these men, though you feel as if you were among a horde of savages."

A Peruvian Fair.

In June last year Colporteur Zamudio made a journey of five hundred miles by train and on mule-back to the great fair at Rosapata, a town of several

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thousand inhabitants, on the road to the Santo Domingo gold-mines and the River Madre de Dios, which runs through Bolivia to join the Amazon. His report tells how he succeeded at Rosapata.

“A priest had come to perform the religious part of the festival, and when he heard of my arrival to sell the Bible, he went out to look for me with a thick stick, saying, ‘Where is this freemason who has come to the town? We should burn him and his books, which are against God.’ At this the tradesmen at the stalls became alarmed, and said that I ought to leave the fair at once; because, should the priest preach against me, the Aymara Indians would rise, and would not only kill me, but being excited with alcohol they would set to robbing and plundering everything they could lay hands on, and the blame of the whole affair would be put upon me. I was willing upon these grounds to leave, but first I went to the governor of the place; he replied that he would not hold himself responsible if I remained. At this, I had my mule got ready for leaving. Then I sought to learn God’s will by prayer; and it came to me that it would be a great privilege even to die for my Lord, as the apostles did. So I resolved to stay, and went into the fair—which appeared to me like the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there were spread out before me more than six thousand souls, all ignorant of the Word of God.

“I borrowed an accordion, and took three Indians, two men and a boy, who were to me as angels; for they could speak Aymara, and served me as interpreters with all good will. They refused to take any payment in money, because, as they said, they would soon spend it; but they each accepted a Gospel with the greatest pleasure. One Indian carried my saddlebags containing the books, while another exhibited a Gospel in Aymara and cried as he went, ‘Here is the Book of God!’ At first, there was some resistance on the part of the Indians, but so soon as one purchased a Gospel in Aymara, many others did the same, and these walked about with great pride, showing their treasures.”

Shrines of Pilgrimage.

In Japan during the spring of 1912 some 4,000

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books were sold among the pilgrims to a famous Buddhist temple on the island of Shikoku. It was the three-hundredth anniversary of this temple, and tens of thousands of people came from all parts of the Japanese Empire, many carrying home with them a Gospel or a Testament.

In Tonking one very popular pilgrimage is made to Kiep-Bac, a place famous for its pagoda dedicated to a renowned general who delivered Annam from a Chinese invasion. This pilgrimage lasts about ten days. The first few days are comparatively quiet, but on the last days immense throngs of pilgrims arrive. In a few hours 15,000 to 20,000 people pack the pagoda and all the adjoining spaces. The tumult is unbearable. Strange scenes take place, as, for instance, when demoniacs are publicly exorcised. M. Bonnet and a colporteur sold 2,000 Gospels among the crowd. Every available room being occupied, M. Bonnet despaired of sleeping accommodation. However, he went to the chief Mandarin, and asked for a little space in one of the rooms adjoining the pagoda. The Mandarin granted his request, but added, "I must warn you that perhaps you will not sleep very well." And the warning proved true, for hundreds of gongs were beaten by the pilgrims unceasingly from dusk till dawn, "a noise," says our sub-agent, "that defies description: only to think of it makes me giddy still."

At Railway-stations.

In Siberia the railway-stations are the scene of some of our most active and successful work. For example, large numbers of the Society's books find a ready sale in Irkutsk station, where a bookcase

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has recently been erected in the third-class waiting-room. The Bible Society has four similar kiosks, or bookcases, at different railway-stations in Siberia, by special official permission. The third-class waiting-rooms at Russian stations are always thronged with passengers by day and by night, so there are ample opportunities for effecting sales.

The Society's agent for Siberia arrived at Krasnoyarsk station, and there in the third-class waiting-room he found our colporteur busy with some peasants, clothed in dog-skins with the hair outside, to whom he was explaining the advantages of our large-type edition of the Russian New Testament.

At Peking Colporteur Yao still goes on selling thousands of Chinese Testaments and Gospels in the railway-station every year. We quote a few lines from his report:

"Since I have been working at the railway-station, many railway officials have read the Scriptures which they bought from me, and they have learned much about the 'doctrine.' When I first came among them they were suspicious and often vexed, but now their hearts are glad when I tell them about the Gospel, and they give me much liberty and encouragement. The soldiers who went to war and came back again wounded not only bought books from me, but also asked questions about their contents.

"When Dr. Sun Yat Sen came to Peking, a high official wanted to know whether I had a permit to allow me to be at the station when the great reformer arrived. I showed him one of the Chinese Gospels and said, 'This book is my permit.' The official bought the book, and said it was all right and I might stay. Many people who came with Sun Yat Sen's party to Peking professed to be Christians."

In Ports and Harbours.

Port Said, at the water-gate between the East

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and the West, is not only the largest coaling station in the world, but of late has acquired continually increasing importance as a centre of trade and tourist traffic. Here the headquarters of the Society's Egyptian agency are now established.

During 1912 over 3,000 ships were visited by our colporteurs at Port Said. More than 10,000 copies of the Scriptures were sold, in 50 different languages. Our men are frequently asked for some unknown version, which can only be identified by the help of *The Gospel in Many Tongues* used as a book of reference. The Society's motor-launch does most efficient service. English, French, German, and Italian troopships and warships have been boarded, and good sales have been made among soldiers and sailors. Our warm thanks are due to the captains who have so readily granted permission to the Bible-sellers to go on board their vessels.

Recently there called at Port Said two Italian transports from Tripoli; on board were some Abyssinian troops in the Italian service, who were being conveyed back to Massawah, the capital of Eritrea, whence they had been brought during the Italo-Turkish war. While the coaling went on, nearly the whole of our Society's staff at Port Said was engaged in selling copies of the Scriptures in Amharic and Ethiopic to these coloured soldiers.

"Scarcely had we opened our bags," says Colporteur Basilier, "and shown the books, when the Abyssinians came running up with the greatest delight. The more books we sold them, the closer they pressed upon us. At times more than fifty hands containing coin were stretched out around us. Our difficulty was to pass the book into the hand from which we had taken the coin, and so excited were these fine fellows that in order to understand each other we were shouting aloud as in a tempest."

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Afterwards, when the Bible-sellers had descended into their boat, the Abyssinian soldiers let down their money tied in handkerchiefs fastened to a rope, those in the boat returning a volume of equivalent price to the sum sent down. Alongside was an Arab vendor of Korans, who had just passed his book up in a basket to a soldier, but while the soldier was busy looking at it the Bible-seller passed up a copy of St. John's Gospel. As soon as the man saw this, he flung back the Koran to the Arab, and immediately bought the Gospel. Then he began to scramble up the rigging, and as soon as he had settled comfortably to read, two or three others scrambled up to him to see what new thing he had got hold of, and when their curiosity was satisfied they came down and bought several more Gospels for themselves. Heads came popping out of the port-holes, all eager to get the books which the Bible-sellers were offering. These Abyssinians were continually crying out "*Daud! Daud!*" "*Ingil! Ingil!*"—meaning the Psalms ("David") and the Gospel.

In the harbour at Alexandria, the chief engineer of an English steamer, who had purchased a Bible from our colporteur on a previous voyage, now bought another. He explained that a few voyages previously one of their sailors had died at sea; but when the time came to bury him, not a person in the whole crew from captain to cabin-boy could produce a Bible, so the poor fellow had to be buried in silence. The engineer added, "We felt ashamed when that report was given in to our Company; but it has brought about a change, and now you will find a Bible in every cabin."

The port of Colombo has long been recognized as one of the great strategic points on the ocean highways of the nations. During 1912 no fewer than 3,144 vessels (exclusive of native craft) entered the harbour, where our two colporteurs did their utmost to seize their splendid opportunities.

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An experienced Japanese colporteur has recently been set apart to work among the shipping in the Strait of Shimonoseki. Along this busy waterway steamers of many nations are continually passing to the coaling port of Moji, where about 11,000 vessels enter and leave in a year. The colporteur has spent ten months going from ship to ship in a small sampan, and has sold 3,600 copies of the Scriptures in various versions.

In Crete our colporteur sold a good many books among the crews of the squadron of foreign warships stationed in Suda Bay, chiefly to English and Russian purchasers; he speaks gratefully of the good reception he always meets with, especially from Russian sailors, and of the assistance he receives from both Russian and English chaplains.

A Barge on the Danube.

At Vienna Colporteur Köck was busy on one of the Danube landing-stages, when he met the crew of a Rumanian tugboat. The captain already possessed a Bible, and the steersman ordered a copy for himself. When Köck went next day to deliver this Bible, the steersman was absent, and as it was raining heavily Köck sought shelter in the little kitchen, where with the steersman's wife and six sailors he spent some time speaking about God's Word. He selected passages from his German Bible, and a Rumanian sailor who understood German translated the passages for his companions. Köck succeeded in interesting these people to such an extent that they ordered a Rumanian Bible. But it was too late to deliver the book that night, and the tugboat was leaving so early next morning that Köck

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could not possibly reach the landing-stage in time. The tramcars from the district where he lodged did not start before 6 a.m. However, Köck thought there might be just a chance that the tugboat would be delayed in setting out down-stream. So with the Rumanian Bible he took the first car down to the landing-stage, and found the tugboat already twenty yards from the shore. He shouted, and the captain stopped the boat. Köck seized his Rumanian Bible, and taking steady aim flung it safely on to the deck. The steersman, who was watching, wrapped the price in paper and threw it ashore. Joyful gesticulations on board showed how thankful they were to possess their book. "It is certain," says Köck, "that this Bible will be read."

In Rumania.

Our veteran Colporteur Hehn, who is stationed at Bucharest, and exercises supervision over the Society's dépôt there, has for one of his tasks to supply the schools with New Testaments. The authorities permit him to enter their schools, and often he goes in with his satchel full and leaves with it empty. A visit paid to beautiful Sinaia, where the King of Rumania has his summer residence, was also successful. Hehn visited likewise the famous monastery at Sinaia, where he is well known and always a welcome guest.

From Galatz, the important commercial city on the Danube, Colporteur Peter Klein extended his journeys into the *comitats* of Bacan, Braila, and Buzen. He found much illiteracy among the peasants, but things are rapidly improving since the introduction of compulsory school attendance. The

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authorities everywhere, civil and ecclesiastical, did all in their power to assist him, and in four weeks he sold 92 Bibles, 200 New Testaments, and several hundred Portions.

In the Compounds at Johannesburg.

Last year an additional colporteur was employed for six months by the Johannesburg Colportage Association to work in the mines. This made it possible to visit every native compound along the fifty miles of Reef, at least once every month. Many of the compound managers gladly render what assistance they can to the colporteurs, and opposition, which was at first very strong in some places, has now practically vanished. This Bible work, carried on among the natives who gather at the mines from every part of South Africa, continues with unabated energy. From time to time evidence reaches us of copies of the Scriptures carried home far into the interior, which have become seed for a fresh expansion of the kingdom of God.

"At one compound," writes Mr. Irving, "a few Central African 'boys' came out. When they saw to their surprise that I had books in their own tongue, they were so pleased that they ran back and brought out an interpreter. They were all very anxious to buy books, but had only threepence among them. So I gave them Gospels on trust, with an English Scripture Calendar to hang up in their room, having received a promise from the interpreter that he would learn a verse for each day, and teach it to the others. After they had gone, another crowd, having heard the news, came out like a swarm of bees. They surrounded our wagon and advertised us by singing a hymn to one of Sankey's tunes. When they had finished, I asked, 'Which of you love the Lord Jesus?' 'Oh! we are all *trying* to,' answered one. 'Does the little child try to love its mother?' I asked. By the help of the interpreter

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I was able to speak a little of the love of God to all. When I had treated them in a similar way to the first crowd, they earnestly desired me to come again, after they had received their pay.

In Yoruba-land.

In West Africa, grants have been made by our Society to the C.M.S. and the W.M.M.S. to aid in supporting negro evangelists and Scripture readers in Yoruba-land, especially in the Lagos district. These men visit towns and villages, reading the Scriptures to the people and wherever possible forming small classes where folk are taught to read. The W.M.M.S. readers have worked from three distinct centres—the Ekiti country, the district of Ibadan, and the out-stations round Abeokuta, and have sold about three hundred copies of the Scriptures in Yoruba. Some idea of their methods and influence may be gathered from the following report.

“Away from the mission stations most of the people are quite illiterate. The readers have associated their instruction with the work of teaching the people to read the Scriptures for themselves. This has resulted in the erection of two small places of worship. What was done in Idere has called forth a response from a neighbouring village, whose people request to be visited by a reader and are preparing to build a small shed in which his work can be carried on. In two other places the chiefs and people have built similar sheds where another reader can gather together his hearers. A third reader has been visiting a group of villages outside the circumference of missionary effort. At one of these villages twenty or thirty young men gathered into a class to hear the Scriptures read, and now most of them can read for themselves. A fourth reader took one of his small schoolboys into an outlying village which was wholly heathen. This lad read from the Scriptures before the chief and his attendants, who were greatly astonished, as no one in their village could read. They confessed that the small



Photo by

A FLOATING-VILLAGE IN ANNAM.

Captain Baudesson.

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boy had more wisdom than they all, and the chief was so pleased that he sent two of his own sons back with the teacher that they might be instructed. In a few months they had learned to read, and now they have returned home to that heathen village with copies of the Yoruba Bible, which they read aloud to listeners gathered round them in the native compound. Who can say where a work of this kind will end?"

Among the Chins.

In Burma our colporteur, who is stationed at Pakokku, made a special tour through the valleys and foot-hills of the country of the Chins. Of this tour the Rev. E. J. Bradford writes :

"It is remarkable that to the Chins, who have no written characters and almost no religion, we were able to sell at Mindat Sakhan 37 copies of Burmese Gospels. They had never heard of such books, or even of the Christian religion, before. It would be difficult to describe the degradation and moral darkness of these people. Perched on the side of a hill I found a small bamboo building where 45 naked Chin youths were being taught by a benevolent Government to read and write Burmese, and it was these boys and others who had left the school who bought the books. In this way the Government, which is strictly neutral in matters of religion, has opened a path for the Gospel. The local chief was deeply interested in the Scriptures which his sons had bought, and besought me to open a mission school there. All along the Yaw and Gangaw valleys the Gospels had never been seen before, and found a ready sale. In Minywa—a large village—the headman himself came round and urged the people to buy, explaining what the books were about. At this place on our return journey a retired Burmese police inspector applied for baptism, as the result of reading St. Matthew's Gospel and listening to the preaching. On our tour we sold 735 copies of the Scriptures."

In Hanoi.

M. Bonnet, our French sub-agent in Indo-China, made a tour in Hanoi, the capital of Tonking. He

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began by spending a day selling in the great market. On the following day he and the colporteur canvassed from house to house, beginning in Sugar Street. Here each street is named after the chief business transacted there; thus there is "Silk Street," "Hat Street," "Coffin Street," etc. The first house they visited was an inn, where men from all parts of Tonking were taking meals, and working their chop-sticks so vigorously that it was evident they had not come to Hanoi merely on business. Thirty copies of the Scriptures were sold among these customers, who had never seen such books before. One man, who appeared very anxious for information, asked many questions, and at last said, "What! Are these really Christians who have these books translated and printed in all languages? And are there really people in Europe who take an interest in us Annamites? I should never have believed such a thing."

Chinese Tea-shops and Villages.

From Nanking the Rev. J. H. Blackstone has sent this translated report—delightful in simplicity and directness—of a few Chinese student-colporteurs.

"We spent July and August itinerating in the country south of Nanking. Our time was occupied in three ways. First, we set up a stand in either tea-shops or market-places, selling the Scriptures and talking to the people; they always seemed glad to hear the Gospel, and usually more than a hundred would gather to listen. Second, we passed through the streets selling the Scriptures and talking with the people by the way; this work was done in the larger places where many people were in the streets. Third, we went to the home of the headman in each of the villages throughout the country districts and explained the Gospel in his home, whereupon the people from the

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surrounding houses would come in and we would sell Portions to them and tell them about the Gospel. Also in the more sparsely settled sections we would go from home to home, making Christ known to those who would hear. In these different ways many thousands of people heard the Gospel, and His Word was placed in the hands of over 2,500 persons, whilst Christ was preached in many places where His Gospel had never been heard before."

In Korea.

Chung Soo Won, a Korean colporteur, formerly experienced much persecution from his parents and relatives because he had become a Christian, and considerable opposition was shown to him and his work in the district where he travels. This, however, he forgets in the gladness of seeing God's Word transforming men's lives. He sold a copy of St. Luke's Gospel to a man who lives in Koo Chu Island. In this man's village there are now 140 believers, who support their own Christian school—all the result of reading one copy of St. Luke's Gospel.

Another Korean colporteur has been travelling for many months in a wide mountainous district in the north of Puk Chong county, famous for its oats and potatoes. Here, during the past year, he sold 1,725 copies of the Scriptures; and six groups of Christians now meet for regular Sunday and mid-week worship as the result of his zeal and faithful service. A missionary of the Canadian Presbyterian Church writes: "We have no agent in Korea so effective as the colporteurs, and we praise God for the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society which has made their presence here possible."

To Quelpart Island, off the coast of Korea, we sent

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a colporteur to work under the direction of the Rev. K. P. Yi, of the Presbyterian Church, who writes: "His influence among us has been fruitful beyond expectation. He met with much opposition. More than once he was severely beaten; but on one occasion he was able to sell a Gospel in the house of a man who had joined in beating him. The man read it, became deeply convicted of sin, and was lead to believe in Jesus Christ. Last summer this convert began to hold services in his own house, and there is now an attendance of fifty. We cannot sufficiently express to God or to the Bible Society our thanks for the wonderful results of this colporteur's labours. There are many who have become Christians through his work."

Helping a Mission in Madagascar.

Archdeacon Cornish, of the S.P.G., writes: "The work of the two colporteurs kindly supplied by the Bible Society continues to be a decided source of strength to the Anglican Mission on the east coast. A new church has lately been started at Beparasy, a large village twenty miles north of Mahanoro, and this happy increase is largely due to the efforts of the colporteurs, who as long ago as April, 1911, began to stir up the people there to wish for better things. I find a note of that date in Colporteur Noa's diary to the following effect: 'At Beparasy I found five people with whom I was able to have some talk. They seemed to have had good desires put into their hearts by the Holy Spirit, for they said they wished they could have a church, and promised that they would try to influence their neighbours to join with them in asking the Govern-

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ment for permission to build one.' Wherever the men go, they and their books are received with eagerness, and I hear nothing but good reports of their work from the various European missionaries whose districts they visit."

On the Orínoco.

On the banks of the vast Orinoco River, which is more than 1,500 miles long, the Bible-seller meets naked Indians as uncivilized as they were when Columbus landed in the New World, savages enslaved by cruel and hateful superstitions, polygamists who will sell their own daughters for £10 apiece. A long journey to the Orinoco and the famous gold-mines of El Callao was made by one of our colporteurs in Venezuela. On this tour, which lasted over three months, he met with great success, selling nearly 3,000 copies of the Scriptures.

In Bolivia.

Bolivia, which is three times the size of France, has only three and a half persons to the square mile; its few towns, only one of which has more than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, are separated by long spaces of wilderness. Mr. Thomas Wallin served our Society during 1912 as a colporteur in Bolivia, selling 5,528 copies. His experiences involved no small amount of hardship and even danger. To ford rivers up to one's waist in water, and to be exposed at night to the intense cold of lofty mountain altitudes, are experiences which try the most robust health. On those barren plains, 14,000 feet above sea-level, the air is so thin that respiration grows difficult, and to carry a heavy bag of books becomes

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a desperate undertaking. Mr. Wallin has done heroic service in Bolivia. Riding along one perilous mountain track he was benighted, and forced to clamber on hands and knees in the darkness, while his horse lost its footing, fell over the precipice with a despairing cry, and perished.

Pioneering in the Western Sudan.

When Tennyson was an undergraduate at Cambridge, he won the Chancellor's medal for a poem on *Timbuctoo*, to which he prefixed these two lines as a motto:

“Deep in that lion-haunted inland lies
A mystic city, goal of high emprise.”

The legendary fame of the city hardly became exact knowledge until the middle of the nineteenth century, and even now Timbuktu is far from easy of access.

In the beginning of August, 1912, the Rev. J. A. Mesnard, the Society's sub-agent in Senegambia, set out on a pioneer expedition into the Western Sudan. He started from the French port of Konakry for the upper reaches of the Niger, which he had already visited in 1911, when frequent attacks of fever obliged him to return to the coast. From Bamako he proceeded to Djenne, the ancient metropolis of the Western Sudan, where he was among the Fula-speaking people. Everywhere he found that the influence of what is called civilization has undermined the authority of Islam.

At Timbuktu.

Mr. Mesnard had a more hopeful field for Bible work among the Toucouleurs of the Maasina country

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between Djenne and Timbuktu, and also among the inhabitants of that far-famed city. Mounted on a humble donkey, with other donkeys bearing his baggage and books, he rode for two hours under a broiling sun from Kabara, the landing-place on the Niger, to the city of Timbuktu itself. There he was kindly received by the French authorities, who gave him a house free of rent and supplied him daily with a skin bottle of brackish water (the only kind available) free of charge. The inhabitants of Timbuktu belong to different races, but most of them are Songhays, and there are many Moors. Outside the city live the Tuareg and their slaves. It was there, for the first time, that Mr. Mesnard met these elusive Tuareg. They are a Berber tribe who remained Christian right up to the end of the eleventh century, and even now are only nominally Moslem. The Tuareg of the south, however, have been longer in touch with the Arabs, and are more Islamized than those of the far interior. Several of them bought copies of the Scriptures, and one Tuareg gave Mr. Mesnard six native-made leather cases for amulets in exchange for five Arabic Gospels. A Fula brought a beautifully worked hat and bartered it for an Arabic Bible.

The Roman Catholic mission in Timbuktu is abandoned; its church has been turned into the Moslem court of justice and the cross removed, while the house which was inhabited by the mission fathers is now used by the native police. In Timbuktu Mr. Mesnard sold 234 copies of the Scriptures, nearly all in Arabic, 50 of which were complete Bibles. He could have sold many more, but he was forced to husband his stock for other places. One man in Timbuktu came to Mr. Mesnard's

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native helper and threatened him, saying, "Take care that your master keeps one book for me; for if you don't, I shall beat you." Of the few copies which were not sold to the natives one Bible was bought by the French Colonel commanding that region, and another Bible by the District Commissioner for the Government Library. An ex-Roman Catholic missionary, who is now a political officer, was greatly impressed with the audacity and usefulness of Mr. Mesnard's enterprise, and said to him, "You are doing an excellent work; nothing can enlighten the Moslems like the circulation of the Bible." There was a freethinker also, who accompanied Mr. Mesnard to his canoe to bid him good-bye, and said, "Never before has there been on the Niger a 'traveller of religion' such as you."

Down the Niger.

From Timbuktu Mr. Mesnard journeyed eastwards down the Niger in a flat-bottomed canoe, reeking with rotten fish and rancid butter, as far as Niamey, covering the distance in twenty days. Shooting the many rapids on the Niger he found to be an exhilarating but dangerous business. From Niamey he rode overland by camels to Sokoto, a journey which consumed fifteen days. Here he found himself in the British Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, which contains the greatest agglomeration of Moslems in the whole of West Africa. At this point, however, he met with the severest disappointment of his eventful journey. Not only was he prohibited from selling the Scriptures, but he was ordered by the British

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authorities to leave the country. As he remarked, "It is most disheartening to come from a Latin colony, where every facility was given to me, into a British colony and there to be politely smothered."

Eager for the Scriptures.

We meet with many touching instances of persons eager to possess the Scriptures and willing to make sacrifices in order to obtain the book they covet.

In the Vosges, at a house where poverty reigned supreme, Colporteur Lheurette found the inmates intensely anxious to buy a Testament. Money was lacking, until a child solved the difficulty. His grandmother had one *sou*; he himself had another; he would go out into the fields, gather some salad, and sell it, hoping that the colporteur would still be in the village. So the salad was found and picked and sold. The proceeds supplied the three *sous* wanted, and the money was ready before the colporteur had gone.

Our colporteur in Southern Hungary one day met a Servian, who said that he lived up in the mountains, where no one came with Bibles. A year before, when he was serving as a soldier, he had bought a New Testament; but as it had become tattered through use he was anxious now to buy a Bible. "I would rather have a Bible," he said, "than a quarter-acre of land."

From Madagascar, Colporteur Randriamaro sends the following: "At one place where I was selling Bibles I met a woman about twenty-three years of age. She was formerly a slave, and is now very poor. She came up to me and said: 'Excuse me, sir, but I am so anxious to possess a Bible of my own.

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I should like to have one now, but I have no money to pay for it. Trust me for a fortnight, if you possibly can, and I will be sure to pay you then.' I trusted her, and on my return journey, a fortnight later, she was there waiting for me with a shilling in her hand. In order to purchase a Bible this poor ex-slave girl had gone about gathering dry grass for fuel, which she sold in small bundles to her richer neighbours."

A Child and her Gospel.

In a market-place at Bordeaux our colporteur had sold a Gospel to a little girl. Afterwards he heard her reading aloud with a clear voice from the book to an old woman who had finished selling her cakes and now sat quietly listening with the greatest attention. The child read on and on, until she reached the Sermon on the Mount. Other women drew near and listened to this child acting as an evangelist in the market-place with no other aid than a Gospel costing one *sou*. At last the child looked up and recognized the colporteur. "I am reading your beautiful book to this poor woman," said she; and the cake-seller, turning with a look of intense emotion, added, "Oh, sir, I have never heard anything so fine: I don't wonder that this is the Book of God."

Colporteurs in Australia.

Our Australian Auxiliaries have set themselves earnestly to seek out isolated settlers and supply neglected districts with the Scriptures.

In New South Wales it is recognized that colportage must be employed to meet the needs of thinly



By permission of the

MOUNT COOK, IN THE SOUTHERN ALPS OF NEW ZEALAND.

N. Z. Government Tourist Dept.

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peopled portions of the State, and especially to reach scattered homes, remote from all regular Christian ministrations. Three highly-qualified colporteurs travel far and wide with untiring perseverance and loyal labour. During last year they journeyed nearly 4,000 miles, visited about 5,000 homes, and distributed 4,628 copies of the Scriptures.

In Queensland other travelling Bible-sellers were vigorously at work during the greater part of last year in remote regions of this immense State ; in the north as far as Mackay, in the west to Longreach, and in the Nanango, Goombungee, Crow's Nest, and Esk districts.

In South Australia a colporteur has most successfully carried the Scriptures among settlers on the west coast. He has held meetings in out-of-the-way places, and taken Sunday services wherever opportunity occurred. In this new country he distributed nearly 2,000 copies of the Scriptures.

In West Australia a Bible-van has been equipped, by the aid of boys and girls in the various Sunday schools. The colporteur found that many of the settlers gladly welcomed the Bible brought to their very doors ; among those who bought books have been travellers by road and rail, employees in breweries and hotels, men clearing the forest lands, and labourers who stopped the hum of farm machinery to attend to his appeal. Children in towns gathered round the van with their coppers to purchase the Penny Testament. In addition to 1,700 copies of the Scriptures in English, this colporteur sold copies in French, German, Italian, Spanish, Hungarian, Swedish, Danish, Greek, Hebrew, Chinese, and Japanese.

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In Canada.

Across the Dominion from Newfoundland to Vancouver the Canadian Bible Society has its own staff of fifty colporteurs and twelve Biblewomen, who amid many hardships carry the Book to the most remote homesteads on the prairie, to the distant lumber camps, to gangs of navvies on railway construction work, to prospectors and miners in search of mineral wealth, and to men in crowded centres, fevered with dreams of riches. We can scarcely understand what the Bible means to folk who live where they are cut off from the fellowship and ministration of the Church of Christ. A little Scotch lassie "back of Saskatchewan" said to her mother, "There's nae God here, but we hae oor Bible."

We realize the strange medley of races in Canada when we hear how at Port Arthur, Ontario, a Bible-class for Persian immigrants was held by a Persian colporteur, while at Hamilton a number of Rumanians were gathered by a Rumanian colporteur for Bible study.

Here are some glimpses of colportage in New Ontario by agents of the Upper Canada Bible Society. In addition to selling the Scriptures, the colporteurs make a practice of reading the Bible, giving counsel, and offering prayer in homes where no such service has been held for years. If they find persons really too poor to buy a copy of the Scriptures, they always present a book.

"In Cochrane we came upon a gang of Bulgarians, digging the foundations for a new bank. They had lost in a great fire the Bulgarian and English Testaments which they had bought from our colporteur the year before. When they learned our

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business, they threw down picks and shovels and looked at the books, and with great joy bought six more copies."

"Between the Mattagami and the Missinaibi rivers, we met a crowd of Russians working on the railroad, who ceased work and gathered round us; and when they saw the Scriptures in their mother tongue they fairly danced for joy, and clapped their hands, and one hugged the colporteur and kissed him. One who could speak a few words of broken English said that the Book in their own tongue was like a message from home to these exiles in a far country."

"At North Bay the Methodist minister took us to see a converted Chinaman, the proprietor of a large restaurant. He told in broken English the story of his conversion. He had begun to learn English, so as to be better able to carry on his business, and bought a Chinese and English diglot Testament. As he read it, his heart grew heavy on account of sin, there came an intense longing for rest; and at last, under the simple and faithful guidance of his teacher, he came to Jesus and found peace. Years of faithful service have testified to the genuineness of this man's conversion."

In Toronto, where many thousands of immigrant foreigners congregate, the Rev. R. Fairbairn has visited from house to house, and has read God's Word and offered prayer in many a home which otherwise would never have been entered by a Christian worker. He writes: "During the past year I have worked a good deal in what is called 'Little Italy.' In one house all the boarders bought Italian Bibles. I visited a Roman Catholic family, and, after making a comparison between their Bible and ours, I sold them a Bible and a Testament. A Roman Catholic Irishwoman bought an English New Testament, and her husband bought an Italian copy."

"I visited the Italian stores, the Greek restaurants, and the shoe-shine shops, reading the Gospel and selling in each. A Greek bought an English Testament and a copy in Modern Greek. I have also read and sold to Greek peanut-sellers in the streets, and also to Italian banana-sellers."

"During the past two or three years I have visited most of the Chinese laundries in the city, and have read and sold Chinese and English diglot Gospels."

"I have visited the General Hospital, Grace Hospital, and

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Western Hospital once a month, and St. Michael's Hospital twice, by request. I found many sick foreigners, especially during the severe weather last winter. I have read the Gospel in their own tongue to Italians, Jews, Greeks, Germans, Frenchmen, Finns, and Chinese. I have distributed New Testaments or Gospels to most patients as they needed them, especially to Bulgarians, Macedonians, Poles, and Russians, to whom I could not read in their language."

Israelites in a Strange Land.

"Coming out of the Bible House in Toronto," writes Mr. Hassard, "I saw two foreigners looking at the foreign versions of the Scriptures displayed in the window. I invited them to come inside to see some books in their own language. Among the books shown was a Hebrew Psalter. One of the young men took it, and after a glance turned to me and asked if I could read it: 'Well, read it.' As I did so, his companion said under his breath, with a nudge, 'He know our language.' After a moment he asked me, 'Can you spell him?' 'Yes.' 'Well, spell him.' When I spelt a few words, his companion, again nudging him, said, 'I tell you he know our language.' His reply was very reassuring: 'Yes, he read it almost like we do.' Then came quickly the question, 'What do you think of our language?' I replied, 'It is a beautiful language; I wish I could speak it as well as read it.' Then what was my surprise to see the tears roll down his cheeks, and to hear him say with a sob, 'O Mister, it is good to have some one love you in a strange land, where not many love you.'"

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THE MAGIC OF GOD'S MESSAGE

"The Scripture is a daily revelation, and the Spirit of God, who is promised to lead us, is a daily inspiration."

DANIEL DEFOE: *The History and Reality of Apparitions.*

"OF making many books there is no end." That confession echoes wearily down the ages, and a modern cynic will often add, "In reading many books there is no profit." When we pace along the corridors of some huge library and gaze on its myriads of dusty tomes, we are burdened with the sense of so much wasted labour and learning, and we whisper, "This also is vanity." Nevertheless, under the mountains of vacant chaff well meant for grain, seed corn is hidden which keeps the world alive. And amid the endless catacombs of books dead and buried, we discover one immortal volume which is as young as the angels, with the power of an endless life.

Year by year our Society accumulates fresh evidence of the spiritual virtue of Holy Scripture. The Eternal Voice still speaks in the Bible and comes home to the heart and conscience of mankind. To quote the rendering of *The Twentieth Century New Testament*, "God's Message is a living and active power, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing

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its way till it penetrates soul and spirit—not the joints only, but the very marrow—and detecting the inmost thoughts and purposes of the mind.” A sub-agent in the Far East testifies from his own experience: “These Gospels are the very garments of Christ, the touch of whose hem brings life and healing to sick and helpless souls.”

In the eyes of primitive men all runes and writings appear half-miraculous, and a book is looked upon as a collection of charms and spells. So the legend describes Merlin's mystic volume, whose syllables carried superhuman power. We need not wonder that simple folk still cherish superstitions in regard to the Scriptures. Last year a colporteur made his way among an outlying tribe in Upper Burma, the Kadus; he describes them as “a very wild race,” who were at first unwilling to touch his books, lest the magic therein contained should immediately turn them into Christians. Some months ago a Moslem *moulvie* called at St. John's C.M.S. College, Lahore, and asked whether they had the Bible in the original language, or only in a translation. He was shown a Hebrew Old Testament. Then he asked, “Is there any magic in the Bible?” and on being told that there was not, but that, on the contrary, the Bible condemns magic and sorcery and witchcraft, he rejoined, “How is it then that the Bible attracts people, if there is no magic in it?” In the Nile Delta, a villager refused to look at the New Testament; said he, “It is better for us to read bad words than these books; for when we read these, our minds become restless and sometimes they make of us a *kafir*” (*i.e.*, an unbeliever).

Some persons read the Scriptures for curious reasons. In the republic of Paraguay, where revolu-

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tions are almost as common as earthquakes in Japan, a man made this strange confession: "During the last revolution I managed to escape all the recruiting commissions, and remained hiding in a cellar for two whole months. What do you think helped me to pass the time? It was the Bible, for in those two months I read every word of it from end to end." A Frenchman in North Africa said, "I have read *La Vie de Jesus* by Renan; now I want a New Testament in order to see what is the opinion of the apostles concerning the Person of Christ." A Japanese, when he was offered the New Testament, enquired, "Is that a book which will polish my soul?" Finally he bought it, saying, "I believe I have made a good bargain."

God's Book only begins its mission when it reaches the hands of those who read it, and so the real story of the Bible Society's work in any year cannot possibly be expressed by statistics. We will quote a few fresh examples which bear witness to the enduring spiritual potency of the Scriptures.

In a Chinese village Colporteur Liu met a man who had been brought to God by means of a New Testament. He confessed that he had read and re-read the story of the Passion with tears, and that he had prayed and fasted in his desire to be fully saved. Across the cover of his Testament he had written: "I am determined to read the New Testament, and to pray every day."

A barber in Japan, who used to be a drunkard, told our colporteur that he had found copies of three Gospels on the sea-shore, where they had been washed in by the tide. He recognized them as "Jesus books," but took them to his shop, thinking that they

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might interest his customers. When trade was slack, he began to read them himself. As a result he gave up his drunken habits, believed, and has been baptized. These Gospels, he considered, were sent specially for him.

Last year in Java our sub-agent met a man to whom he had sold a Gospel twenty years before. The man was then a rich opium-farmer, who used to adulterate the opium he sold ; but after he had read the Gospel, his conscience forced him to give up opium-dealing altogether. This left him comparatively poor, and his relations regarded him as mad. Afterwards he bought a New Testament ; as a result, he and his family were baptized, and he has induced several of his friends to become Christians.

A young Chinese in Kansu bought a copy of every edition our colporteur was carrying. He then piled the volumes before the image of Buddha in his home, and said to it: "Are you true, or are these books true? I have bowed down and worshipped you for many years, and you have said no good words to me, nor given me any good books like these to read. In them I find forgiveness of sins and the way to heaven : are you true, or are they?"

At the Toronto Exhibition last year a young man came up to our stall who had been one of Dr. Barnardo's boy emigrants, and had brought out with him to Canada a Bible presented by the Bible Society. That book led him to Christ, and he said, "God bless the Society for what it is doing for the poor."

The following quaintly worded sentences occur in a letter written to an English lady during the summer of last year by a young Japanese student who had heard of Christ for the first time on May 31, 1912.

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"How are you getting along in such a trying sultriness? I hope you are in excellent health, and leading a happy life. I, too, am very happy, swimming in the water and climbing up mountains. I am reading, every morning and evening, the Book [a Japanese Bible] which you gave me the other day. It contains full of the sacred, precious phrases which should be observed as Golden-Rules to the end of my life. Above all, the most favourite ones is the Psalms in the Old Testament and the Sermon of Christ on the mountain in Matthew, New Testament. I have read them over and over again, until I almost learned it by heart. I should say, if you allow me to say so, the latter [*i.e.* the Sermon on the Mount] is the fundamental spirit of Christianity. How did I be moved when I read: 'But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. . . . But I say unto you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. . . .' O what a noble, boundlessly generous saying is this! I have heard that Christianity is the religion of Love; but now, yes, just now, I found it is strictly true. And I can do no more anything without this Book."

One of the chief translators of the Santali New Testament, used by the Mundas in Bengal, was the Rev. P. O. Bodding, a Danish missionary. In 1905 he lost his assistant, a Christian Santal, and engaged instead, not without hesitation, a better linguist who was, however, a heathen. The Gospels had been completed, so the new man sat day by day with Mr. Bodding translating the Acts and the Epistles. As he went on at his task, he grew so thoroughly convinced of the truth of the Christian revelation that he became an earnest believer and desired to be baptized. Thus one of the leading heathen in that district was changed into a humble disciple of our Lord, continually bearing witness to his faith.

In Korea, at the busy port of Fusan, there lived a woman, the mistress of a wine-shop. She was

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notorious as a bad character—a very Jezebel, who feared neither God nor man. A gracious little Korean Biblewoman ventured one day within the doors of that vile-smelling tavern, and her faith was rewarded by the sale of a Gospel. The tavern-keeper probably bought it to be rid of her visitor; but the Word was quick and powerful, it discerned the thoughts and intents of her heart. As she read the story of the woman taken in sin, she realized for the first time that the wages of her life would be death. Without disposing of her business or selling her remaining stock of wine, she poured the contents of her casks into the drain, closed her shop, and returned to her native village, where a few Christians had been struggling against much opposition. In that village, almost entirely with her own money the transformed woman has built a church, and God is using her mightily to manifest His saving grace.

In Abyssinia, where the official Church represents Christianity in its most debased and superstitious form, men hardly dare be found reading the Bible. At Adis Ababa, the capital, our friend the Rev. Karl Cederquist, of the Swedish Mission, maintains his station notwithstanding political changes. He writes: "The Gospel really spreads, in spite of all obstacles. One by one, Bibles are carried away and hidden in all sorts of places. A Christian will dig a hole in the ground at home, and take out his volume at intervals to read it, when he hopes that no enemy sees him. One Bible-reader came to me, and expressed his wonder at the Book of God. He said, 'First we heard about the Bible; then we saw it, but we did not like it; by and by we came

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to realize that such a Book could be understood even without a teacher.'"

From China, the Rev. E. E. Bryant of Tsangchow writes: "Some two and a half years ago Colporteur Swei sold a New Testament to a farmer named Huoa Li-ping. Six months ago this man met Mr. Swei again and invited him to his home. There he explained that ever since he had bought and read the New Testament, he had been longing to come across the man who sold it to him. He wanted to learn more about the Gospel. Swei taught him what he could during the time he spent there, and Mr. Huoa said he would like to go in to the mission and see the missionaries and other Christians. A week ago he arrived here, having walked twenty-five English miles, carrying his own luggage. He is nearly sixty, a farmer, and can read fairly well. I found that he had a real grip of what religion meant. When I began to talk about the New Birth, he interrupted me, saying, 'I know what that means. For some months I have felt a change in me. Now, I just want to live for God.' It was evident that he meant it. Cases like this tell us that colportage is not in vain, even though at times we see no fruit. For two years who knew that this Testament was doing any good? 'Sold, and no result,' would be the report. And now!"

Bishop Stileman, of the C.M.S. Mission in Persia, writes from Ispahân on Feb. 3rd, 1913: "Last Sunday I had the privilege of baptizing a young Persian named Yuhanna (John), who is about twenty-three years of age, and unusually well educated. He comes from a village some distance away, where a short time ago he became possessed

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of a copy of St. John's Gospel in Persian—which some robbers had stolen from an Armenian Christian. The study of this Gospel left him greatly perplexed, in consequence of the Koran's denial of our Lord's crucifixion and death. But, as is so often the case in this land, a remarkable dream, in which Christ appeared to him, convinced him that the Gospel was true and not the Koran. He accordingly found his way to Ispahân on purpose to place himself under instruction, and he is now a bright, earnest Christian. His father is very angry at his son's conversion, and has, I believe, disinherited him; but Yuhanna is going home this week, and is prepared to face persecution for Christ's sake. There is no doubt that he will be in some danger. At his baptism he took the name of Yuhanna, because it was the *Injili Yuhanna* (St. John's Gospel) which first revealed to him the light of Christ."

Last year in Java, Mr. Ingwersen, of Poerworedjo, met a Bengali in a railway carriage who was preaching the Gospel to his fellow-travellers. On inquiry, he found that this man had never been inside a Christian church, but that he had bought a printed Gospel from one of our colporteurs and had learnt it almost off by heart.

Light from Stray Leaves.

A Persian *mullah* came to our dépôt in Teherân, and narrated the following: "Two months ago I was in Nejef, studying religious law. The thought came to me about those nations that have not the Koran, as to what their religious ideas might be. Going one day to the roof of the Masjed, I found

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some leaves of a book strewn about; they were three in number. Picking them up I saw the words, '*Injili Mattha*' [*i.e.* Gospel of Matthew]. I read the leaves many times over and liked them much; but I was afraid to keep them, so left them where I found them. Now I have returned, and am resolved to see the complete book. If you have a copy of *Mattha*, I should like to read it. Please open it at the 3rd, 4th, and 5th chapters.' These were the chapters on the torn leaves which had so impressed his heart. He sat down, and read and meditated for about two hours; then putting in a mark, asked that the book might be kept for him, and left. He came daily for ten days, frequently asking questions concerning matters he did not understand. Finally he said, 'My position is such that I cannot take this book to my house; I must come here sometimes and read it, waiting for freedom of religion. I thank God for having fulfilled the desire of my heart.' "

From Korea one of our colporteurs writes: "When visiting Kok San district I had a fresh proof that the volume I am circulating is a living book. An old man had purchased St. Matthew's and St. Mark's Gospels and read them with interest. One day, when he was out in the fields, his house caught fire and was completely destroyed. On his return he found that nothing had been saved except the two Gospels, which a member of his family had rescued, not knowing what they were. This impressed him very much; he read them with deeper interest, and finally decided to become a Christian. At first his neighbours despised him for reading the Christian books, but gradually they have come back to him as friends. To-day in that village there are more than eighty

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believers. This work began by the reading of two Gospels. The man was converted solely through reading the Scriptures and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, as he had not met a preacher or any Christian teacher until after he was a believer. Surely God's Word is life-giving."

From India come fresh illustrations of the evangelistic value of the Gospels. The beginning of Christian work among the Thado-Kukis is traceable to the fact that a copy of St. John's Gospel in Lushai found its way into the hands of a Thado-Kuki chieftain who was able to read Lushai. He read the Gospel, and then sent it to the nearest missionary with an earnest appeal, written on the flyleaf, asking that he and his people should be visited and receive Christian instruction. His request was granted, and now there are about one hundred Thado-Kuki Christians.

The application of a band of villagers in Chota Nagpur for entrance into the Christian community had its origin in the finding by the roadside of a page of St. John's Gospel in the vernacular. This was read to the villagers by the chief man of the village, with the result that they all agreed to become Christians. As a proof of the reality of their convictions, they at once began to build a small chapel and a house for a catechist.

Thus the influence of the New Testament becomes collective and cumulative as well as individual. In India it is leavening the ideals of the noblest and most ardent souls. We may quote the witness of an experienced C.M.S. missionary:

"There is a large class of enthusiastic, deeply religious, patriotic reformers who see that the Bible, interpreted by the



A NORTH INDIAN COLPORTEUR WITH HIS BOOKS SPREAD OUT FOR SALE IN A BAZAAR.

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Christian consciousness of the present day, has a powerful message to the modern Indian mind. But patriotism forbids them to become converts to a non-Indian religion, however great may be the appeal to their higher nature. What they do, therefore, is to try to reform their own religion and its practices, by interpreting them in the light of the Sermon on the Mount. Within the last few years they have taken over the whole of the moral programme of Christianity. They preach the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. They denounce the evils of caste, idolatry, infant-marriage, and are warm advocates of female education and of the regeneration of the 'depressed classes.' There can be no doubt as to the influence of the Bible! The effects of Biblical teaching are most apparent and most conclusive."

During the meetings of the Indian National Congress last year at Bankipore, a bookstall was opened and the Scriptures were publicly offered for sale. Though few books were sold, the reason given is remarkable: nearly all the educated Indians who were approached declared that they had copies of the Christian Bible in their homes already.

Finally, the subject of this chapter has an obvious and vital bearing on the inspiration of Scripture. In the words of a great living theologian, "It is just as certain that the Bible is inspired, as it is certain that the one people of God from generation to generation have found it the meat and drink of their souls." Scholars and historians submit the Bible to criticism in their studies; but the severest test of all is the test which plain men apply to it in the stress and strain of life. We cannot more fitly conclude than with the witness of Dr. James Hope Moulton in his *Fernley Lecture*: "Some devout students of Scripture say that the results of the past century will do nothing to impair the divine authority of the Book;

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and, on the other hand, there are those who say that in time its authority will crumble to pieces. Time will show which prophecy is right. . . .

“The fearful may take fresh courage, for if these things are false and damaging to the Book of God, as Gamaliel said, God will take care of His own. While we have been trying to find our own answers to these theories that trouble us, God has been finding His own answer, and that is always the best answer. What is that answer? It is the British and Foreign Bible Society. Through the century criticism has been finding the Bible truly human, and through the century the Bible Society has been finding it divine, by letting it speak for itself without note or comment, in the languages of the whole earth. And wherever it has spoken, the wilderness has blossomed as the rose, and the madman has sat clothed and in his right mind at the feet of the Saviour. While miracles like these continue to attest the uniqueness of our Book, we have small reason to be angry or afraid, whatever science may determine concerning the human features of a message thus manifestly from God.”

HAVE YE NEVER READ?

HAVE YE NEVER GIVEN?

"The question is not how much of our money we will give to God, but how much of God's money we will keep for ourselves."

HAVE ye never read that it is the duty of those who possess the Gospel to hand it on to others? Whatever blessing we have obtained from God's Book is the measure of our debt to make that Book the common property of our fellow-men. There are, indeed, some gifts of civilization which become deadly when they are imparted to barbarous races. But one gift is in itself an unmitigated boon. The best thing we can do for any human being who knows how to read is to put into his hands the New Testament in his own tongue. Experience proves, as we have seen already, that this volume possesses a spiritual virtue and potency of its own. Even where it lacks Christian interpreters and teachers, it can become itself the most convincing of all preachers, the most evangelical of all evangelists, the tireless and ubiquitous missionary that penetrates everywhere and never needs a furlough.

The Bible Society was founded in response to the appealing needs of the poor, and it remains faithful

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to its original mission. While it jealously guards the conditions under which its books are printed and bound, it deliberately sells its popular editions at a loss; and to defray this loss it relies upon the subscriptions and donations from those who love the Bible. The prices of its cheap editions are fixed so that the Scriptures may be brought within reach of the humblest class of labourers in any country. Thus at home an English New Testament can be bought for 1d., and an English Bible for 6d., while a strongly-bound school Bible in admirably clear type is sold for 1s. The Society's 6d. Dutch Bible is the cheapest book in South Africa, where more than 23,000 copies of it have gone out from Johannesburg in the last four years. In France, Italy, and Germany, the Society's cheapest Bible is sold for about 1s., and this involves a loss on every copy. In each of the great languages of India we publish a 1s. Bible—the cost of production varying from 1s. 8d. to 3s.—and a 4d. New Testament, which costs on an average about 8d. In China, where in many provinces a common coolie can earn only 6d. or 7d. a day, our Society sells a Chinese New Testament for 1d., which costs 5d.; and a Bible for 6d. which costs 2s. In Madagascar a Bible which costs about 1s. 8d. is sold for 1s.

Profit and Loss.

Here is the latest example of profit and loss in our price-list. The newly revised Malay New Testament in Arabic character, which has just been published, costs for printing and binding alone 95 *cents* a copy; the book is sold throughout Malaya for 15 *cents*. A similar revision of the Malay Old



Photo by

A HINDU FESTIVAL IN SOUTH INDIA.

the Rev. G. R. Emms

HAVE YE NEVER GIVEN?

Testament costs for printing and binding alone \$2.75, and is sold for 60 cents.

In Japan, where the New Testament is sold for five farthings a copy, Colporteur Okamura met a man who objected, "These books are too cheap: are you sure you will not come again for more money?"

In Egypt a Moslem was shown a shilling Arabic Bible; he carefully examined the book, its paper, and binding, and said, "Indeed it is very cheap; if you grew this book like potatoes, it would be impossible to sell it at such a price."

"These books must be false," said an Italian, "otherwise, if they were not false, they would not cost such a trifle." Our colporteur explained that the Bible Society paid the difference for the buyer. "But what motive has the Society in paying the difference?" "Just the same motive which benefactors have when they bequeath legacies to hospitals."

Exchange and Barter.

We can scarcely realize the poverty of the poor in many countries. Every year our colporteurs report curious examples of sale by barter. The purchaser is destitute, or is unable at the moment to lay his hand upon the necessary coin, and so he offers some equivalent.

A colporteur who was journeying through Abyssinia, in charge of mules laden with the Scriptures which he was offering for sale, encountered an Abyssinian chief. The chief inspected the volumes and became interested. He expressed a wish to purchase a copy, but had no money on him. However, he grew so eager to possess this sacred treasure,

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that at last he offered to hand over the weapon hanging at his side in return for a book.

A missionary in Mwala, one of the Solomon Islands, recently forwarded £3 2s. 6d. for copies of the Gospels published by our Society in three languages—Saa, Lau, and Fiu. These books were actually paid for in food, fish, or strings of teeth, which, when sold by the missionary, realized £3 2s. 6d.

In South West China last year many of the Miao and Lisu tribesmen, having no money to give for their new Gospels, paid with hemp-cloth, fruit, eggs, and pine chips. One boy went out and gathered pine chips for other boys and girls to burn, in order that they might have light by which to study the Gospel; for performing this task he himself received two Gospels.

Colporteur Christoffel, who works in Galicia, tells of one young man who was very eager to buy a New Testament, but was unable to find money to pay for it; after some lively negotiations they agreed to a can of buttermilk as the price. Near Varna a countryman gave Colporteur Popoff three *kilos* of lentils for a Bulgarian New Testament. A peasant in Styria had no money, and the only article which he could barter was a small sack of nuts; Colporteur Köck accepted the nuts, and the peasant went home rejoicing with his Bible.

At the village of Valfortore in Southern Italy a shoemaker insisted on patching Colporteur Olivieri's shoes *gratis*, out of sympathy for his noble work. The cobbler's gratitude went into the mended boots, and so the Gospel messenger was thankfully shod.

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Without Money or Price.

It is a law of human nature that ordinary people are far more likely to read and value a book if they have paid even a trifling coin to secure it. As a general rule, therefore, the Bible Society makes some small, often nominal, charge for its popular editions. The Society's servants and colporteurs have instructions, however, when they find any destitute person who can read and really desires a copy, to present the Book to him as a free gift. And in all cases of special necessity or opportunity—for the sick in hospitals, for criminals in prison, for children in orphanages, for lepers in asylums, and for inhabitants of regions smitten by famine or pestilence or persecution—the Society relaxes its normal rule and offers the Scriptures freely to those who so sorely need consolation.

Last year Italian Gospels were presented to thousands of soldiers leaving Italy for Tripoli; and Chinese Gospels were given away to thousands of troops during the fighting in the Yangtse valley. Japanese Testaments were accepted by 26,000 policemen and prison-warders in the prefectures of Japan.

For Soldiers in the Balkan War.

In the late autumn of 1912, when war broke out in the Balkans, the Society at once utilized the opportunity to distribute God's Book among the soldiers of every nationality engaged—Turkish, Bulgarian, Servian, Montenegrin, and Greek. This task was greatly assisted by the Red Cross Societies—British, German, and Bulgarian, which permitted us to forward consignments of books direct to them at the seat of war. A number of Testaments and

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Gospels were also despatched through the Bulgarian Legation in Berlin, the Chief of the Legation sending a letter expressing the thanks of the Bulgarian Government. Two colporteurs reached Cettinje, and distributed several thousands of copies in Montenegro, as well as among troops engaged in the siege of Scutari.

Valuable assistance was rendered by the Servian Minister of War, who took charge of 'over 24,000 copies and engaged the army chaplains, who are priests of the Orthodox Church, to distribute the books in accordance with our wishes. The Chaplain-General to the Servian forces sent out the following circular with each package of Gospels for the front:

"The British and Foreign Bible Society has presented to the sick and wounded Servian soldiers 24,000 New Testaments and Gospels, hoping that God through His Word will lighten the burden of war. Our soldiers battle against the powerful enemy of Christianity who has slaughtered so many of our brethren. May the sick and wounded be comforted and strengthened by the reading of Christ's Gospel."

One of these Servian army chaplains, as he was engaged in distributing the books, told the soldiers that a British Society was the donor, whereupon the soldiers raised cheers for England.

A wounded soldier in hospital at Belgrade cried out, "This is the best book in the world," and his companions in suffering listened eagerly while he read aloud to them from the sacred page. Hands were stretched out from the beds to receive the Gospels distributed by our colporteur, and the patients were delighted to accept the books, and prayed God to bless the Bible Society. In Bulgarian hospitals wounded soldiers would kiss the colporteur's

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hands as he gave them Gospels and Testaments. Two of our Servian colporteurs had to join the colours, and one of them was engaged in the siege of Adrianople. The house of a colporteur in Bulgaria was turned into a hospital, while he and his wife nursed the sick and wounded.

Many thousands of Gospels and Testaments were also given away among Turkish soldiers and prisoners of war. Complete statistics could not be furnished before the Society's accounts closed. But nearly 150,000 books have been thus distributed at the seat of war, at a cost to our Society of not less than £1,300.

To Indian Students.

The Bible Society presents the Scriptures to all students at Indian Universities. Each man, when he enters college, is offered a copy of the four Gospels and Acts in English; half-way through his course he is asked to accept an English New Testament; and when he has graduated, the Society endeavours to arrange that he shall go forth with the English Bible in his hands. During 1912 no fewer than 8,380 volumes were thus distributed as gifts from our Society among the students of India.

The Altar and the Sacrifice.

"You can measure the altar," said Dr. Parker, "but you cannot measure the sacrifice." The income of the Bible Society depends not merely or mainly upon munificent donations from wealthy friends and supporters. Its treasury is replenished year after year by numberless gifts which represent the self-

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denials of humble folk, not merely in England but in remote corners of the world.

A considerable number of native Christian colporteurs and Biblewomen employed by our Society abroad are being maintained by gifts from individual friends at home. In China, in Korea, in Japan, in India, in Ceylon, in Malaya, in Palestine, in the Sudan, in Persia, and in the Russian Empire, there are now altogether 214 colporteurs and 59 Biblewomen thus supported, representing more than 190 contributing friends of the Society, whose generous help we very gratefully acknowledge.

Our missionary friends in the far corners of the earth do not forget the needs and claims of the Bible Society. High up among the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, the Moravian Mission has for years had a station at Leh, in Little Tibet. In their small church at Leh they made what was for them the record collection of *Rs.* 17.2. This sum was sent to our secretary at Lahore, with a specimen of the offertory envelopes which two young Tibetan Christians made and inscribed with Tibetan words meaning: "Though I received the Bible without payment, I hold it priceless."

From British East Africa a letter comes from Mr. Sywulka, of the Africa Inland Mission at Nasa: "I have told the congregation of the books printed for us by the Bible Society. To show only in a very small way our appreciation of what you have done for us, and our remembrance of you, the congregation—all of us—have collected *Rs.* 25 (= £1 13s. 4d.), which we send to you herewith with our love and prayers." This gift is an expression of gratitude for the Gospels, Acts, and certain other books of the New



Photo by

J. C. White.

INMATES OF AN ISOLATED BUDDHIST MONASTERY IN TIBET, 15,000 FEET ABOVE THE LEVEL OF THE SEA.

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Testament, published in Sukuma. The sum is equivalent in Nasa district to one man's wages for a year.

A gift of £12 comes from the Society's Coptic Auxiliary at Cairo. From the New Hebrides Auxiliary comes £18 5s. From Papeete, Tahiti, the Rev. L. de Pomaret, of the Paris Evangelical Mission, sends £12 as a contribution from the *Conseil supérieur des Eglises tahitiennes*, "pour aider au peu la Société Biblique dans l'œuvre bénie qu'elle accomplit dans le monde, et sur laquelle nous appelons l'aide toute puissante du Saint Esprit."

From Paraguay last year the sum of \$110.10 (Paraguayan money) has been received as a thank-offering from the Lengua Indians for what the Bible Society has done for them.

At Morgenster, Victoria, South Rhodesia, the African Christians connected with the mission of the Dutch Reformed Church in Mashonaland—who had been living themselves for part of last year on roots and wild fruit—made a picturesque collection for our Society. One man brought a couple of sugar-canes from his early garden; another the only pumpkin left in his garden by hungry thieves. Others brought green mealie-cobs and wild water-melons. A number of people gave what they earned by one day's labour in the mission-garden. Several sold bundles of wood, so as not to come empty-handed on Bible Sunday. One man actually put into the collection-plate—or rather, basket—a large auger, which he had used to bore holes while he was building his house, but which he could now dispense with to be sold for the benefit of the Lord's work.

In Korea, one woman, having no money, put into the collection her silver ring, which probably repre-

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sented her savings for years. A missionary writes: "In Chang Mal we have only about twenty-five people. They are all desperately poor, but they send the Society 7 *sen* (1½d.)—not very much intrinsically, though it is seven-tenths of a labourer's wage, or about equivalent to 5s. 3d. in English money. It comes out of their abject poverty, where two pitiful meals of barley a day is all they can afford. This will give some idea of what Koreans think of the Bible and the Bible Society."

As a specimen of the gifts from Chinese Christians we quote from a Kiangsi missionary's letter: "I am herewith sending you 20 *cents* as a donation to the Bible Society from a woman of our church. She went without her allowance of meat for a year and divided the money between different objects." The members of a Chinese congregation in the same province write: "We at Nanchang, Hsimachuang, greatly appreciate the cheapness of the Bibles you sell, and because of the many benefits thereby received, we thank you heartily. In consideration that the Lord's love is so expansive, and one-ten-thousandth part of it cannot be recompensed to Him, we, male and female believers, have made a collection of \$21.30, which is a very small return for all His blessings. May you all have peace every day."

Out of their poverty and affliction the inmates of the Pretoria Leper Asylum generously contributed £3 15s. to help in spreading the Scriptures.

Near Bombay are the headquarters of Pandita Ramabai's remarkable work among Indian widows—a work built up entirely on the Bible. Ramabai herself became a Christian through reading a New Testament which had been given her. There are at

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present 1,300 widows in her home at Kedgaon, and they decided to forgo one-fifteenth part of their grain allowance in order to devote the money thus saved to the Bible Society. This will bring in over one *rupee* a day, or nearly *Rs.* 400 (about £26 12s.) a year, as their thank-offering.

From Madras the poor lepers in the Pigram Asylum sent *Rs.* 7-11, which they saved by going without their curry for a whole month; "they gave the money," so runs the message, "with a glad heart." For the second year in succession the children in Stanes Boarding Home in Coonoor have gone without fruit once a week, and as a result of their self-denial, steadily maintained during the whole year, the sum of *Rs.* 13-4 was received.

Munshi Faiz Ullah, of the C.M.S., writes: "I send *Rs.* 8-8, being the church offerings of the Fathgarh poor Christians for the Bible Society. May God send you means to make the Bibles cheaper still."

In England a collecting box, sent in recently to an Auxiliary by an Old Age Pensioner, contained the following note: "Please find herein the sum of 8s. 3d., a few pence from an old man for whom the Lord has done so much."

The Opportunity and the Call.

Looking back across the Society's experience during the new century, we discover special grounds for gratitude. Through all its departments and agencies the machinery of our work has been thoroughly overhauled and readjusted, so that to-day it is more efficient and economical than at any previous time—more fit to cope with the still greater tasks which lie before us. This achievement has been made

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possible mainly through the Society's Centenary Fund, and the remarkable increase in legacies at a critical time.

Looking forward, we recognize our high calling, we accept our solemn and glorious Christian duty. In days when much appears doubtful and uncertain, the vocation of the Bible Society shines clear and unmistakable in the sunlight. Never before, since history began, has the world been so open to God's Book and so eager for God's Book. In all lands, as we have seen, men are learning to read; and they are begging to read the Scriptures. The claims for new versions and new editions which arrive at the Bible House are literally overwhelming. The situation grows more serious month by month. The new demands for the Bible outrun all the resources of the Bible Society. Hitherto the Society has never failed to answer the call of opportunity; but our friends must understand that this high policy can only be maintained by a speedy and generous enlargement of its income. May we rise up with fresh faith and courage and sacrifice to meet this wonderful appeal. May we ratify and repeat the prophetic pledge with which our dead President ended his address at the Society's anniversary last May:

"We have not turned to the right or left from the path which the founders of this Society originally laid down. Our sacred promise to God Himself, renewed year by year at our annual meeting, is that His Word shall reach even to the uttermost parts of the world."

APPENDIX

IN MEMORIAM

THE MARQUIS OF NORTHAMPTON
K.G.

BORN 1851 DIED 1913

PRESIDENT OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY
SINCE 1900

‘Our sacred promise to God Himself, renewed year by year at our annual meeting, is that His Word shall reach even to the uttermost parts of the world.’

Conclusion of the President’s speech at the Society’s anniversary
in Queen’s Hall, London, May 7th, 1913

NOTICE RESPECTING REMITTANCES.

Subscriptions and donations are received at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.; also at the Society's Bankers, WILLIAMS DEACON'S Bank, Limited, 20, Birchin Lane, E.C.;—advice being sent to the Secretaries at the Bible House. Cheques, Bankers' Drafts, and Post Office Orders (*on the General Post Office*) should be made payable to *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and addressed to the Secretaries.

Letters containing Orders for Books are requested to be addressed, prepaid, to the British and Foreign Bible Society, 146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. The Society's Depôt is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., the Offices from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Saturdays the Depôt and the Offices close at 1 p.m. The Bible House is closed on the usual public holidays.

FORM OF A BEQUEST TO THE SOCIETY.

I bequeath the sum of *Pounds sterling*
free of Legacy Duty to "THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY," instituted in London in the year 1804, to be paid for the purposes of the said Society to the Treasurer for the time being thereof, whose Receipt shall be a good discharge for the same.

HOME TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS: *Testaments Cent London.*

FOREIGN TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS: *Testaments London.*

TELEPHONE: *2036 Central.*

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1905. The BISHOP of BRISTOL.
The Hon. JUSTICE FORBES.
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D. E. HOSTE, Esq.
SAMUEL LLOYD, Esq.
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1907. The BISHOP of SOUTHAMPTON.
The BISHOP of EXETER.
The BISHOP of MOMBASA.
Sir GEORGE SMITH.
I. P. WERNER, Esq.
1908. EARL GREY.
The BISHOP of SOUTH TOKYO.
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Sir WM. MACGREGOR, G.C.M.G.
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J. RENDEL HARRIS, Esq., D.Litt.
C. D. GINSBURG, Esq., LL.D.
A. J. CROSFIELD, Esq.
Rev. JOHN SHARP.
1909. The ARCHBISHOP of YORK.
BISHOP MONTGOMERY, D.D.
Prebendary H. E. FOX.
Rev. J. CAMPBELL GIBSON, D.D.
Rev. W. W. JACKSON, D.D.
Rev. R. WARDLAW THOMPSON, D.D.
Rev. GEORGE BROWN, D.D.
Sir G. A. GRIERSON, K.C.I.E., Ph.D.
ELIAS ROGERS, Esq.
W. ALDIS WRIGHT, Esq., LL.D.
Sir FRANCIS F. BELSEY.
1910. LORD LANGFORD, K.C.V.O.
The MASTER of the ROLLS.
The Rev. LORD WILLIAM GASCOYNE
CECIL.
Sir J. T. DILLWYN LLEWELYN, Bart.
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Rev. ALEXANDER CONNELL.
Rev. J. H. SEAR, KESPEARE.
The Rt. Hon. T. R. FERENS, M.P.
1911. The Rt. Hon. JAMES BRYCE, O.M.
The BISHOP of WINCHESTER.
The BISHOP of MADRAS.
Sir THOMAS BARLOW, Bart., M.D.
CANON R. BRUCE, D.D.
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Rev. J. SCOTT LIDGETT, D.D.
THEODORE HOWARD, Esq.
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1912. The BISHOP of NORWICH.
Sir HENRY E. E. PROCTOR.
Sir WILLIAM LEE-WARNER, G.C.S.I.
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Rev. HENRY HAIGH, D.D.
Rev. Sir WILLIAM ROBERTSON NICOLLI,
LL.D.
1913. The BISHOP of CALCUTTA.
The BISHOP of SOUTHWAKE.
Rev. F. LUKE WISEMAN.
Archdeacon WESTCOTT.
Rev. OWEN EVANS, D.D.
Rev. Prof. A. S. GEDEN, D.D.
Sir ANDREW WINGATE, K.C.I.E.
T. ORENEY GARBIT, Esq.
Prof. ALEXANDER MACALISTER, F.R.S.
ALFRED BRAUEN, Esq.

* Died July 7, 1913.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

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ROBERT BARCLAY, Esq.

Chairman of Committee .

WILLIAMSON LAMPLOUGH, Esq.

Committee :

Elected May 7, 1913.

The dates indicate when members first joined the Committee.

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*F. S. Bishop, Esq.	1908	T. P. Newman, Esq.	1904
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H. W. Maynard, Esq.	1898	†Max Weeber, Esq.	1913
		Axel Welin, Esq.	1907
		Robert Whyte, Esq.	1907

The Committee meet at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., on a rule, on the first and third Mondays in every month, at Half-past Eleven o'clock; and oftener, as business may require.

Secretaries :

The Rev. ARTHUR TAYLOR, M.A.

The Rev. JOHN H. RITSON, M.A.

Translating & Editorial Department. { The Rev. R. KILGOUR, D.D., *Editorial Superintendent.*
Dr. H. F. MOULE, *Assistant.*

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Publishing Department. { Mr. GEORGE COWAN, *Publishing Superintendent.*

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MR. A. BUCHANAN.

Collector :

MR. GEO. B. POOLE.

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& CHANCE, 30, Mincing Lane, E.C.

Bankers :

WILLIAMS DEACON'S BANK, Ltd.,
20, Birchin Lane, E.C.

■ Deceased since March 31, 1913.

† Not on the Committee last year.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

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- | | |
|---|---|
| Pastor D. Lortsch,
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* Resigning at the end of 1913.

† Resigning October 1st, 1913, succeeded by the Rev. H. G. Roberts, M.A.

SUMMARY

THE British and Foreign Bible Society exists for one single object—to supply every man with the Holy Scriptures in his own mother-tongue. It concerns itself solely with circulating that Book which is the charter of Christ's Church throughout all the world. And in this aim it unites Christians of almost every communion.

The Year 1912-1913.

Twelve months ago we announced a year's issues which for the first time in the Society's history had exceeded 7,000,000 volumes. But the total for the year which closed on March 31, 1913, has again increased by half a million books. The issues now to be reported have amounted altogether to 7,899,562 copies of the Scriptures. This remarkable result is made up of 936,346 Bibles, 1,266,919 New Testaments, and 5,696,297 smaller Portions. All over the world men are learning to read, and more of them are reading the Word of God.

Examining the returns for last year more closely, we note that the issue of complete Bibles was 32,000 fewer than in 1911, though still 32,000 more than in 1910. The issue of New Testaments was less by 317,000. In 1911, however, there had been an abnormal demand for the Society's new Penny English Testament, and for special editions commemorating the Tercentenary of the Authorised English Version and the King's Coronation.

The issue of Portions has risen by 854,000 ; this wonderful growth consists mainly of Gospels or Psalters, published for missions and sold at nominal prices in the mission field : thus it becomes an index of missionary progress among non-Christian nations.

We note that of last year's issues more than a million and a quarter volumes were in English or Welsh, which are read

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as a rule within the British Empire. Of these books, about half a million copies were cheap popular editions which entail considerable loss to the Society. We desire, however, to repeat that such books are produced under conditions of labour which are carefully watched by the Committee.

Two-thirds of the Society's total issues are printed abroad, for the most part in the countries where they are read.

The total issues by the Society since its foundation have exceeded 244,444,000 copies of the Scriptures, complete or in parts. Of these more than 87,000,000 have been in English.

The Work at Home.

Of last year's total issues, 1,279,000 volumes were in English, Welsh, Gaelic, or Irish, and circulated mainly in the British Empire. This number is 258,000 below the figures for 1911-1912. Of the English Penny Testament, in its new and improved edition, 174,000 were issued—as compared with 347,000 in the previous year—making a total of 9,683,000 during the last twenty-eight years. The Scriptures issued last year in English included 137,000 copies of the Society's 6d. Bible; 99,000 copies of the 10d. Bible; and 69,000 copies of the 'Ionic' 1s. School Bible. The total included 19,915 Bibles and 7,841 Testaments in the English Revised Version—as compared with 1,201,000 Bibles, Testaments, and Portions in the English Authorised Version.

To assist and increase the circulation of the Bible in places which are not reached by ordinary booksellers, the Committee grant special colportage terms to all societies and institutions which regularly carry on the sale of the Scriptures by colportage among the poor in England and Wales.

In England and Wales the Society spent over £6,000 last year, mainly in grants of Scriptures—free or at greatly reduced rates—to the schools and home missions of nearly every Christian Communion, and to all the varied agencies of religious and philanthropic activity.

Nearly all the English and Welsh institutions for befriending the blind obtain the Scriptures which they require from the Bible House, at less than half the cost of their production.

Students at Theological and Missionary Colleges in England and Wales, who need such assistance, receive ■ gifts over

SUMMARY

1,000 Old Testaments in Hebrew or New Testaments in Greek each year. The Society also presents outgoing missionaries with Bibles or Testaments in the vernaculars of the fields in which they labour.

A subsidy of £500 a year is given to the London Biblewomen and Nurses' Mission for the maintenance of over 100 Biblewomen, who, during the year ending December 31, 1912, sold 1,894 copies of the Scriptures among the poor living in the mean streets of London.

Translation and Revision.

The Society's historical list now includes versions in FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY distinct forms of speech. This means the complete Bible in 111 different languages ; the New Testament in 108 more languages ; and at least one book of Scripture in 231 other languages.

These versions are printed at about fifty different places, and in sixty different sets of characters. One hundred new languages and dialects have been added to the list since the present century began.

In embossed type for the blind, the Society has already helped to provide the Scriptures in thirty-three different languages.

The Society's expenditure last year for translating, revising, printing, and binding the Scriptures was £121,729.

The Partner of Missions.

The foreign missions of almost every Reformed Church draw supplies of Scriptures from the Bible Society. These are sent out, carriage paid, to the remotest mission stations, on such terms that practically no charge falls on the exchequer of the missions which receive and circulate the books. In every field the missionaries are our most enthusiastic helpers and our most grateful friends, testifying to the indispensable assistance which they thus obtain.

From the Bible Society the Church of England obtains almost all the Scriptures required for its foreign missions.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts has procured Scriptures from the Bible Society in seventy-eight languages. The Church Missionary Society has used one hundred and eleven different translations which come from the

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Bible House. The Universities' Mission to Central Africa obtains from the same source all the versions which it uses. Equally important help is rendered to the Melanesian Mission and the South American Missionary Society.

Nonconformist Foreign Missions also obtain the bulk of all the Scriptures they use, directly or indirectly, from the Bible Society.

It furnishes the London Missionary Society with the Scriptures in fifty-nine different languages, and Methodist Missions in different countries with ninety-five versions. Presbyterian missions throughout the world use one hundred and thirty-two of its versions. It published the Kongo New Testament for the Baptist Missionary Society, and also supplies many B.M.S. stations in China and Jamaica. The China Inland Mission and other undenominational societies obtain from the Bible Society practically all the editions of the Scriptures which they use.

The enterprises and triumphs of Christian Missions are creating as many new and imperious claims upon this Society—which has never refused to publish a duly authenticated version of the Scriptures in a new tongue. Each new tribe evangelized, each fresh language reduced to writing and grammar, each new convert baptized, means a new claim for help from the resources of the Bible House—help which is most gladly given, on such terms that it creates no charge upon the funds of the Mission which is aided thereby.

In Foreign Lands.

The Society maintains dépôts in more than a hundred of the chief cities of the world.

It employs 1,200 native Christian colporteurs who were continuously at work throughout the year 1912, supervised by the Society's foreign agents or its missionary friends. The sales by these colporteurs reached the unprecedented total of 3,750,000 copies of the Scriptures.

It supports from 500 to 600 native Christian Biblewomen, mainly in the East, in connection with forty different missionary organizations.

The Society's total expenditure on colporteurs and Biblewomen during 1912 amounted to £48,933.

SUMMARY

Auxiliaries.

At the close of 1912 the Bible Society had 5,333 Auxiliaries, Branches, and Associations in England and Wales. During 1912 as many as 4,599 meetings were held, and 3,451 sermons were preached, on behalf of the Society.

Outside the United Kingdom the Society has over 3,000 Auxiliaries and Branches, mainly in the British Colonies. Many of these carry on Bible distribution vigorously in their own localities, besides sending generous annual contributions to the Bible House in London.

The Centenary Fund.

When the hundredth anniversary of the Bible Society's foundation was celebrated in 1904 the Committee appealed for a Centenary Fund of 250,000 guineas, "to meet the imperious needs and claims for extension in every quarter of the globe." In November, 1905, the Committee were able to announce at a great Thanksgiving Meeting held in the Albert Hall that the whole sum asked for, £262,500, had been contributed by the Society's friends. Interest, etc., on investments brought the ultimate total up to £311,567.

The Centenary Fund from the first was allocated to specific objects, which were defined and adopted by the Centenary Grand Committee. The scheme of distribution has loyally followed the lines laid down in the original appeal; and whilst taking account of immediate pressing needs, has aimed at capital and non-recurrent expenditure, which would help to relieve the Society of some of its annual charges.

A large proportion of the Fund has, accordingly, been devoted to securing sites and erecting or enlarging depôts, or other suitable premises for the Society's work, at various important foreign centres. Among these we may mention: Port Said, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Bangalore, Lahore, Simla, Colombo, Rangoon, Maymyo, Singapore, Canton, Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin, Yunnanfu, Newchwang, Mukden, Chang Chun, Seoul, Kobé, Manila, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth (W.A.), Cape Town, Johannesburg, Vancouver, and Winnipeg. At nearly all these centres the Society had been previously paying rentals for premises held on uncertain tenure and steadily increasing in cost.

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Under these headings a total expenditure of £126,032 has been incurred, and a further sum of £63,811 has been allocated to a Property Fund for the acquisition or erection of Bible Houses still needed.

The cost of the Centenary Celebration itself, including the promotion and raising of the Centenary Fund, amounted to £14,985 ; and £5,802 was expended in producing histories of the Bible Society and other literature of an educational character.

Altogether £12,753 has been expended on special editions of the Scriptures, and provision has also been made for other important editions in hand.

The sum of £13,753 has been spent on new colportage work, and in founding or reorganizing agencies in various parts of the world. This included special colportage tours in Japan, Korea, Annam, Burma, Mongolia, the Republics of the Andes, Brazil, Argentina, Central America, North and West Africa, Russia, and Central Europe.

The expenses of altering and enlarging the Bible House in Queen Victoria Street, in order to adapt it to meet the expansion of the Society's work since the House was opened in 1868, amounted to £24,807.

The Society's Benevolent Fund, of which a special feature was made in the Centenary appeal, has been strengthened to the extent of £23,619.

A more detailed summary of the Centenary Fund expenditure will be found in the Appendix to the Annual Report. It will be seen that the balance—consisting of £6,791—is held as a Colportage and Contingency Fund at the disposal of the Committee.

In closing the Centenary Fund Account on December 31, 1912, the Committee put on record their deep thankfulness to God for the benefits which it has secured for the Society at a difficult period of its history. The possession of so many valuable properties in different countries abroad, besides giving prominence to the Society's position, has added greatly to the stability and permanence of its work. The Centenary Fund has enabled the Committee to meet many sudden calls which could hardly have been borne by the ordinary funds. It is a matter for thankfulness that from the outset the Fund has been devoted mainly to relieving the finances of the Society rather

SUMMARY

than to establishing new ventures, the upkeep of which would have added materially to the Society's annual expenditure. As a result, the Bible Society is, happily, in a stronger position to meet the new and growing claims now made upon it.

Last Year's Expenditure.

The total payments from the General Fund for the past year have been £268,189.

In producing editions of the Scriptures, the Committee have laid out £121,729; this is £3,138 less than in the previous year, though still nearly £15,000 more than in 1910. The cost of colportage has risen by £1,756, while the other expenses connected with the Society's foreign agencies have fallen by £2,672.

Receipts.

The General Fund receipts have risen to £267,218—the largest income ever received by the Society in any normal year. We must be profoundly thankful for so cheering a result, which is due to several co-operating causes.

The donations paid at the Bible House in London amounted to £25,267—an increase of £8,093, part of which was given to help to wipe off last year's deficit.

Legacies again show a remarkable increase: the total receipts from this source during the twelve months amounted to £72,744. Following the usual practice, £52,596, being the average of the receipts from legacies during the last seven years, has been taken into income—the balance, £20,148, being carried to the Legacy Equalization Fund.

The returns from sales produced £95,271, a falling off of nearly £9,000, part of which is covered by unpaid accounts.

Contributions from Auxiliaries.

The total contributions from Auxiliaries, etc., have risen to £85,333, which is £3,650 more than in the previous year. Part of this increase was due to the inclusion, for the first time, of gross receipts in the case of some of the Australian Auxiliaries. The advance, however, from the

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Over-seas Dominions more than counterbalances a disappointing reduction of £2,542 in the gifts from Auxiliaries in England and Wales.

The Canadian Bible Society has again increased its gifts for Bible work both within the Dominion and beyond its borders. After defraying the entire cost of the former, the contribution available to aid the Society's work in foreign lands has risen to the splendid total of £6,734. Our Australian Auxiliaries have raised altogether the sum of £7,666: out of this, £4,859 was expended locally, leaving £2,807 for the general work of the Society. The contributions available for general work from New Zealand, after deducting expenses, amount to £1,412.

We may mention that £280 has been raised for the Society in Russia, £342 has come from the Republics of the Andes, £390 from the Yoruba Auxiliary at Lagos, and £1,605 from Auxiliaries in South Africa. Contributions from India and Ceylon have risen to a total of £3,415. The Hibernian Bible Society sent £1,405.

Payments and receipts, under sundry Special Funds, raised the Society's total receipts last year to £267,667, and the total expenditure to £269,311.

Obituary.

Since our annual meeting in 1912 death has removed twelve of the Society's Vice-Presidents: the Bishop of Lichfield; the Bishop of Truro; Bishop Johnson, formerly of Calcutta; Viscount Peel, thrice elected Speaker of the House of Commons; Dr. Griffith John, the venerable missionary and translator of the Chinese Bible; Dr. Thomas Hodgkin, the distinguished Quaker historian; the Rev. Dr. H. J. Pope, the eminent Wesleyan divine; the Dean of Durham; Canon Christopher, of Oxford; Mr. Henry Morris, who joined the Committee in 1879, and was for nineteen years its Vice-Chairman; Dr. F. P. Weaver, of Hampstead, who joined the Committee in 1895; and General Booth, who did so much to make common people in England read the Bible.

The Committee also mourn the death of a much-valued colleague, Mr. W. C. Parkinson.

SUMMARY

The Staff.

The Committee have appointed Mr. Alexander Hope to be the Society's agent in Persia, a post left vacant by the death of Mr. Th. Irrsich. For several years Mr. Hope has been working as sub-agent at Port Said.

Mr. A. E. Butler, who has served since 1909 as one of the Society's secretaries in India, has been appointed secretary of the North India Auxiliary, in succession to the Rev. T. S. Wynkoop.

Mr. Thomas Hobbs has been appointed sub-agent for the Society in Korea.

Mr. Sidney Smith has been appointed sub-agent for the Society in the Valley of the Amazon, making his headquarters at Pará.

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CONDENSED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS EXTRACTED FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING

RECEIPTS.

FROM SALES OF SCRIPTURES.

Sales through trade depôts, Auxiliary and other societies	£31,666 15 9	
Sales in the Society's Foreign agencies ...	63,603 18 1	
		<u>£95,270 13 10</u>

FREE INCOME.

Contributions from Aux- liaries, Foreign agencies, &c.	85,322 11 5	
Annual Subscriptions, Donations, Legacies, &c.	87,074 0 9	
		<u>172,396 12 2</u>
		<u>£267,667 6 0</u>

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AND PAYMENTS OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY,
(GENERAL AND SPECIAL FUNDS),
MARCH 31st, 1913.

PAYMENTS.

For Production of editions of the Scriptures ...	£122,148	9	2
For Distribution of the Scriptures	110,758	14	7
For Administration	18,696	19	11
For Home Organization	17,707	1	8

£269,311 5 4

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Letters of George Borrow to the British and Foreign Bible Society

Published by direction of the Committee. Edited by T. H. DARLOW.
Price 7*s*. 6*d*. net. Hodder & Stoughton, London, New York, and Toronto.

Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society

Compiled by T. H. DARLOW, M.A., and H. F. MOULE, M.A. In two vols., 8vo., large paper, bound in dark blue buckram, top edges gilt. Vol. I., English, published in 1903. Vol. II., Other Languages (1,750 pp., bound in three parts), now ready. Only 500 sets printed, of which 450, numbered and signed, were for sale in England and America. The subscription price of the last 200 sets has been raised to £3 3*s*. net for the two volumes (not sold separately). To be obtained at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.

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